Encounter

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NTHONY RHODES on
'The Persico Papers"
n the Vatican Archives

Pope Confronted by
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fter Pope John Paul's Visit
Report by KEITH KYLE

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Confessions of a Biographer

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ntellectual Hygiene . . . for the '80s

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The Sinai Discussion

The Case of Robert Havemann

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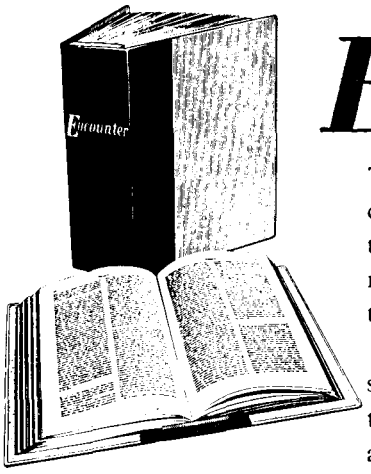

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Encounter

FEBRUARY 1980
VOL. LIV No. 2
ISSN 0013-7073

Edited by MELVIN J. LASKY *and* ANTHONY THWAITE
MANAGING EDITOR: *Margot Walmsley* ASSISTANT EDITOR: *Bryan Healing*
GENERAL MANAGER: *Anthony Robinson* ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER: *John Hall*
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Per copy: UK £1.00: USA & Canada $2.50. Back numbers £1.50 ($3.75). Postage/packing: 20p (45c).
Annual Subscriptions: UK £12.00: USA & Canada $28.00 surface, $35.00 by air: Elsewhere £13.00.
Binder for six copies: £3.00 ($6.75).
Address for all departments: Encounter Ltd., 59 St Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4JS (01-836 4194).
US news-stand distribution by Gordon & Gotch (USA) Inc., P.O. Box 1425, Long Island City, N.Y. 11101.
Authorised as Second-class mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa, and for payment of postage in cash.
Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. © *1980 by Encounter Ltd.*
Manuscripts are returned only if accompanied by s.a.e. (English stamp or International Reply Coupons).

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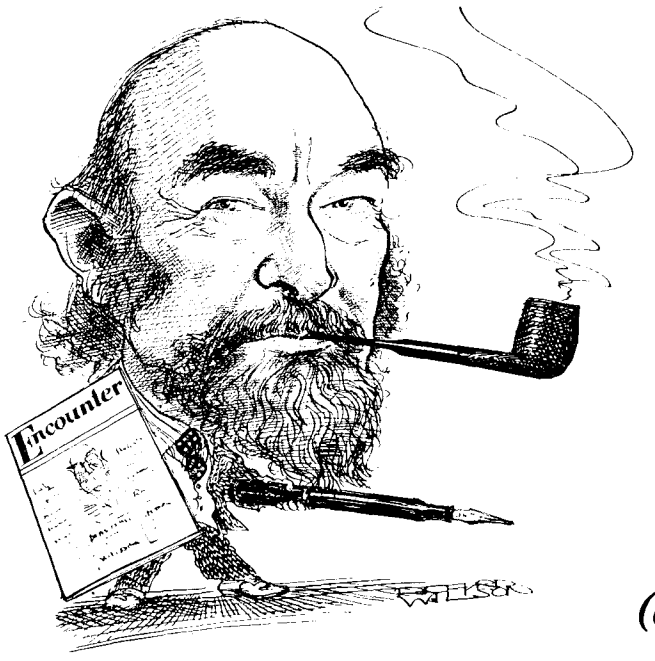

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Neill Foster

The Pig May Fly

An address delivered in the Horticultural Hall, Bridgnorth, 31 June 1979

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. Now that I have, albeit temporarily, ceased employment as a general manager and am planning to sit it out for at least a year's educational sabbatical, to broaden my intellectual base as it were, it behoves me none the less to bring to bear upon my new situation all such as may be relevant of those lessons which my eighteen arduous years at or near the top have, sometimes painfully, taught me. First and foremost I must be sure to identify my potential priorities and to select level-headedly those few which my time and personal capacity will enable me to really go for, with a chance of success rationally assessed in accordance with the principles of decision theory and Bayesian probability, and of an adequate pay-back over my next sixteen years to theoretical retirement, assuming eventual re-employment.

It's all very well me scooting about bringing my undoubted excellences to the attention of what I fervently believe are the "right quarters", in which respect I have by no means been doing things by halves lately, in hope of getting myself a non-executive seat on some not too prestigious Board or a place in a Quango, so as to keep my experience up to date and my skills in play but—and here I do so very much mean but—it is quite essential that I do not try to shelter in the warmth of old intellectual haunts and habits to the detriment of the variety and adventure that are the essence of my inherently risky endeavour.

Therefore, I have now decided to devote an average (I should technically say a mean) of 22.7% of each working day, at six working days per week and on no single day, illness aside, going beyond 1.5 standard deviations from the mean, to testing exhaustively, definitively, and finally whether or not pigs can be made to fly.

Do I hear you ask why on earth I should seek to pioneer porcine aeronautics? (I'm not sure that one shouldn't nowadays say avionics, but let that pass.) I think I do indeed hear you so ask, and therefore I will tell you why.

But first let me point out that your question is inherently mundane. If you cared to raise your sights above the level of the terrestrial horizon, you might feel able to rephrase your question as "Why in air should you seek . . .?" Which gives a lift to the whole thing. But forgive me, I digress, albeit in parallel.

The thought was first triggered in me, a few years ago, by the BBC's series on the eight wives of Henry the Sixth with that actor who's since been trying to switch to occasional singing. There was a scene in which the old ogre's dear little wife—was it Catherine Howard?—tried to cheer him up with a funny story about a chap condemned to death in King Louis of France's prison who proposed to save himself by offering to teach the King's horse to talk within one year. You probably remember it; the punch line went ". . . or the horse may talk." In its own way quite hilarious, really, but then I thought—why not? Why should a horse not be taught to talk?

There is a splendid chap in the States, who incidentally is himself of nobly equine appearance, called Frederick Herzberg. He has shown how one can motivate people to work better by paying attention to factors in their working life called "motivators"—which is pretty profound thinking. Now I reckon that if you can identify the right motivators it should help greatly in getting a horse to talk or a pig to fly. Of course one may reasonably suspect that the motivators will be in some degree different in the two cases; you would not expect to turn-on a sow in the same way as

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you would turn-on a stallion; or at least I wouldn't. If I can find a way (and here behavioural science will play a big part) to make pigs sincerely want to fly, I believe that will be half the battle; and my wife tells me she is of the same mind.

My interest in this scientific programme also stems from my maternal grandfather, in two ways. Fundamentally he was a man of pioneering spirit and of great acumen. I am happy to say that he succeeded in passing the first quality on to me in abundant measure. As to the second, I have tried to rely upon the advice of my bank manager, but it just has not seemed to work out in the same way. Another significant influence has been the fact that my grandfather was himself a pig-fancier. His line was Wessex Saddlebacks, but when he died and the estate got broken up, the pigs in question unfortunately passed out of our family.

I MENTIONED THAT half the battle lay in motivation; not mine but the pig's. The other two quarters lie in the design of the porcaerocraft and in the choice of pig.

I've not got very far with the machine side of it yet. As I see it, the main trouble is that most modern aeronautical knowledge is orientated to large high-speed aircraft and is almost totally irrelevant to harnessing pig-power. The relevant sources for me include, of course, Leonardo da Vinci. I have made approaches to the Institut de France in Paris in order to have certain original drawings of Leonardo's photocopied in an enlarging machine. They have been very courteous but, of course, cautious; and quite right too; you have to be very careful who you let near these irreplaceable art treasures. However, they wrote to my former employers where the enquiry got passed to the Personnel Dept. who fortunately decided to hand it on to the company doctor, an old friend of mine. He apparently has certified me, in writing, as a totally suitable person to head-up the Pig-Flight Programme, so the way now seems clear so far as Leonardo is concerned.

My other source of appropriate and relevant technology is of course the young American who has lately pedalled his way across and above the Channel. Obviously there will be no trouble in getting him to supply know-how, as he is on record in forecasting man-powered flight as a major public pastime in the post-petrol era. I must say that my heart goes out to him in the cruel situation in which he is placed, the penalty so often paid by the pioneer. By the time that the International Olympics Committee have recognised his sport, surely 1988 at the earliest, he will be well over the hill as a gold medal contender.

MY OWN MAIN RESEARCHES so far have concentrated on the choice of pig, and I have decided on the sub-species "Porcus Lenticularski" which was so aptly named by its classifier for its striking resemblance to a bean-pole. Thus the name itself conveys perhaps some of the athletic qualities of this remarkable animal; what is not obvious is that its vital capacity is outstanding, as a result of its natural and, with one exception, sole habitat being above six thousand feet on the south-western slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanganyika.

My calculations show that a prime specimen reared and trained at altitude, and brought swiftly to sea-level, should be able, pedalling with both pairs of trotters, to produce (conservatively) a steady 203.4 joules per hour per kilo for fifty-seven minutes before any oxygen debt begins to build up. This work-rate when harnessed to the super-light machine, covered in stretched pig-skin and lard-lubricated throughout, will produce an average speed of 19.37 knots, sufficient to enable the Channel to be crossed in still air, between my chosen sites, in only forty-eight minutes. As I say, with adequate output available, much will depend on motivation.

Biochemical tests upon muscle tissue taken from P. Lenticularski and structural calculations based on skeletal measurements of the bones and tendon attachment points have indicated that exceptional athletic potential exists. This is undoubtedly due to successful adaptation to a terrain, in natural habitat, appropriate to the chamoix of Switzerland.

These tests are of course fundamental to the animal and are in no way dependent upon current environment. It is with deep gratitude that I record my debt to The Most Honourable Marquess of Bake who so kindly afforded me the run of his private herd of P. Lenticularski

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at his seat at Fontwell Grange in Cambridgeshire, the only specimens known to exist north of Nairobi. The Bake family are one of the oldest Catholic families in the country and it is their proud custom that no first-born male member has been to London in the last three hundred and seventy years, a record which owes much to the fact that tenure of the title and lands are rigorously entailed upon the observance of that custom. Long seclusion in deep Fen country has led to preservation or evolution of other singularities of which it is only appropriate and right for me to mention two, both arising from a lingering and perhaps cherished sense of having been a proscribed religious minority. Fontwell Grange is the only stately home where, after arduous in-depth research at the estate piggeries, I have consistently been accommodated in a sleeping-bag on a folding-bed in a real priest's hole, and the only one I know of where Mass (Tridentine) is heard every Sunday by the entire family and staff in the cellars and officiated at by a Priest who arrives and leaves hurriedly through the servants' quarters.

RETURNING TO THE PRESENT-DAY exigencies of the Pig-Flight Programme, let me just touch upon the proprieties. Although I have a written clearance from the RSPCA to the effect that, basically, pigs can swim, coupled with a requirement to keep the rescue tender within fifty yards of the porcaerocraft at all times, I have none the less designed a special ultra-lightweight flotation garment for P. Lenticularski, which inflates automatically upon contact with the water. My design is based upon a famous wartime jacket for pilots and I have filed for patent under the descriptive title "Sow-west." Further, although (and to my surprise) not actually required by statute, I intend to ensure rigorous equality of opportunity among female and male specimens of P. Lenticularski at all stages of selection for pilotage of the porcaerocraft Channel crossing. I can assure you all, without fear or favour, that my uppermost concern will be to choose the best pig on the day.

Some of you may feel that I am taking an undue risk by hazarding the entire outcome of the Pig-Flight Programme upon this totally untried and little known sub-species. I must assure you that full genetic and drawing-board evaluations, on a comparative basis, have been made of a suitable collection of promising Porci. The decision has had to be made upon the fundamental data available; actual athletic experience of Porcus of any variety is not currently available.

However in one small sense I hope to introduce to the Programme one other variety of Porcus. I intend to replace whatever membranous material is used in the American technology as a covering for the airframe with an extremely thin and infinitely elastic substance. It may well be that the dermis of one of the lesser-known Porci will be found to possess those qualities—in which case it might be jocularly renamed Porcus Politicus. (*Pause for laughter.*)

The only other sub-species that came close to being chosen for pilotage was one brought to my attention by an experienced and engaging former colleague, namely Porcus Priapus. (I refer to the pig, not the colleague.) My wife and I took a close look at P. Priapus, and we were surprised.

However, while this animal is suitably lean and raunchy in appearance and has, by reputation, plenty of get up and go, it is significantly less well endowed in vital capacity as to lungs. Indeed it must live its life in a state of breathless expectation. I also recognised that the boar might be more susceptible to irrelevant distraction during training than the Porcus I have, with every confidence, finally selected.

It is the case that P. Priapus inhabits now exclusively the lower slopes of Mount Vesuvius, and has done so since Roman times, as evidenced by certain volcanically preserved graffiti from that region. It is, to me, remarkable that my necessarily brief and limited researches should have turned up two such outstanding and yet little known varieties of Porcus, both living in mountainous terrain. I am hoping that such publicity as the Pig-Flight Programme will inevitably attract will enable me to persuade the BBC to back me in making a TV series, "The High-Altitude Pig", based upon a world-wide search for further varieties. Richard Attenborough will be hard to follow for anyone, but the demand he has awakened must inevitably be supplied, and all those who follow will have to specialise in some degree.

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I am extremely sorry that I am unable to show here a single photograph of P. Lenticularski. Being unemployed and of limited means, I have necessarily to restrict my personal expenditure on the Programme, albeit already considerable, and am confined to my old 35 mm Asahiflex, of 1956 vintage, with its original general purpose lens. In photographing P. Lenticularski one can only do it justice by using telephoto for shots end-on, and wide-angle for shots side-on, and my camera affords neither facility. However, those of you who happen to have at home a tolerable reproduction of *Les Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry* will be able to see in the plate for November, "La Glandée" (The Acorn Harvest), a Porcus having a very similar mien, rather shorter leg and back, and altogether too corpulent belly and buttocks.

It is quite shameful that the only reference, the only single reference, to P. Lenticularski that I can find in the literature is in an obscure and, in my view, quite unworthy paper submitted by a member of the Danish delegation to the XVIIth International Confederation of the World Nurture Organisation at Lima in 1963, in which this remarkable animal is dismissed as "baconless rind" (official translation).

IN SUMMARY, Ladies and Gentlemen, you will readily appreciate the importance of the Programme which I propose to undertake and at the same time the virtual impossibility of my doing so without financial assistance. A number among you, nay indeed most of you, must be persons who—whether from a disinterested passion for science, a longing for association with adventurous pursuits, a sympathy with causes otherwise lost, or a desire for vicarious notoriety—would be heartbroken at being deprived by default of the opportunity of taking your rightful supportive role in this inestimably worthwile Programme, and taking it at the earliest opportunity. I have therefore ensured for you the availability at the door as you go out of a receptacle—should I say "pork barrel"?—into which you may discard in bounteous free-fall such superfluous banker's notes as might by their retention shade or question your bright and otherwise so well-founded self-image as men of significance, spirit, and uncommon quality of mind.

Thank you.

Days

They come to us
Empty but not clean—
Like unrinsed bottles

Sides clouded
With a film
Of yesterday.

We can't keep them
Except in diaries
And photographs;

Our task
Is to fill up
And return.

There are no wages.
The reward is said to be
The work itself.

And if we question this,
Get angry, scream
At their round clock faces

Or try to break the glass,
We only hurt ourselves,
The days remain intact.

Days are indestructible.
Even night
With dark and sleep

Is not their weakness
But a tease
To make us dream of death.

There is no end to days
Only a cloth laid
Over a birdcage.

Vicki Feaver

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Missions to Ireland

The Persico Papers

An account by ANTHONY RHODES, based on previously unpublished documents from the Vatican Secret Archives, of the inquiry of a Papal Emissary on behalf of Pope Leo XIII.

"The present outrages in Ireland are associated with influences higher than those of the men who commit them."
W. E. Gladstone, *in* THE TIMES, *13 May 1887*

EXTREME CAUTION has always marked the dealings of the Holy See with Ireland, a caution based not only on secular traditions of prudence, but on contact with a mentality which, if a mystery to Englishmen, is no less opaque to the closer reasoning of the Latin. Disinclination to be involved in Irish affairs, to attempt to find out—"the Truth"—which is always clad in a variety of Irish garments—is a very old policy of the Holy See.

TOUCH "the Irish Question" in any century, and so many topical echoes resound that one finds oneself asking whether history repeats itself, or whether there are any lessons to be learned from history. Well, it doesn't and there aren't (as we were forced to conclude, even when publishing [in ENCOUNTER, January 1972] those haunting letters of Edmund Burke written in 1796). It does sometimes appear that the more things change, the more they remain the same. But it remains important to identify clearly the elements of continuity and change; and in these Persico Papers there are striking elements of what is different and what is the same, in tantalising combination. Much in the Irish Troubles has remained constant over the centuries; no less has been transformed by events of politics and economics. And yet....

IGNATIUS PERSICO *(1823–1895) was a Neapolitan, educated by the Jesuits and a member of the Capuchin order. One of the ablest men in the Vatican service, he served as a missionary in India, and in America as Bishop of Savannah, Georgia. He was fluent in English, and was for many years the leading figure in Rome's "Propaganda Fide." He was named a cardinal in 1893, two years before his death.*

ANTHONY RHODES *is the author of "The Vatican in the Age of the Dictators" and of a biography of d'Annunzio. In 1979, with the opening of the Vatican's secret archives covering the reign of Pope Leo XIII (1878–1903), the ceremony was marked by Pope John Paul II handing to Mr Rhodes the first sheaf of "secret" documents. (In England the embargo on secret documents is 30 years, in France and Italy 50 years, in the Vatican now 75 years.) Since he wrote his concluding paragraphs to this article, it was reported (in "The Times", 12 November) that*

> **"the Pope's official representative in London is being given diplomatic rights, including permanent diplomatic immunity, as the first step towards establishing full diplomatic relations between the Court of St James and the Holy See.... The British Government has previously considered that the historic breach between Henry VIII and the Papacy had put insuperable constitutional obstacles in the way of formal relations with the Vatican.... The Holy See's representative in London would be called a 'pronuncio', rather than the more traditional 'nuncio', to avoid difficulties over precedence.... The Papal excommunication in 1570 of Queen Elizabeth I has been mentioned as an obstacle, but the Vatican's view is that that now has no relevance whatever...."**

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It dates back to pre-Reformation times, before there were any such things as Orangemen or Londonderry Apprentice boys. Froude maintains that on the few occasions when the Holy See has attempted to intervene in Irish affairs, it has regretted it. The last Papal Legate sent to Ireland in the 17th century perished mysteriously in the bogs. Since then, there has been little enthusiasm on the part of Roman prelates to undertake missions there as Papal Legates. Yet in 1887, not long after "the Troubles" had begun—fomented, the English Government alleged, by the Irish priesthood—this again became necessary; and the unfortunate Monsignor Ignazio Persico, a Neapolitan with much more experience of Pontifical missions, was selected to go there and confirm or refute the English allegations. A distinguished prelate, the titular Archbishop of Damietta, he was in his early sixties, and a martyr to arthritis.

Papal Legates always tend to be unwanted guests among the Bishops and clergy of the land they visit and are required to pronounce upon: for when the Legate arrives, some of the spiritual honours and prerogatives of the local Bishops devolve on him. Any service at which the Legate officiates, however small, be it a mass or a benediction, tends to be regarded by the people as being virtually performed by the Pope himself. If this applies in the Catholic and Latin countries, with which the Holy See is familiar, how much more true is it in Ireland which, although one of the most devout of Catholic lands, is also one of the most insubordinate? In what other Catholic country could a native Archbishop publicly announce, "All interference by the Pope in the present situation is to be deprecated?"[1] Or, as Mgr Persico reported to Rome halfway through his mission to Ireland, "It is useless for me to repeat to Your Eminence that the Irish Bishops themselves do not want the intervention of the Holy Father. On the contrary, they do all they can to impede it. . . ." Or, to descend in the hierarchy and quote the words of an Irish priest, Father M'Glynn, to an audience in New York at about this time, "The Pope in politics! What business has the Pope in politics? Why, the Pope can preach a sermon in St. Peter's, and that sermon may be as full of heresies as a plum-pudding is full of plums. . . ."

Nor were the leading lay Irish Catholics any less inclined to criticise the Head of their Church. In May 1887, a resolution was passed at the Mansion House and signed by fifty Irish Catholic MPs which, after alluding to the ignorance of the Holy See in Irish affairs, stated, "Irish Catholics do not recognise any right of the Pope to interfere with the Irish people in the management of their political affairs."

THE REASON FOR these three outbursts was the usual one—the Irish were in conflict with their English overlords.[2] On this occasion, the contention was over something which appeared on the surface to be no more than a legal problem, the high rents imposed by the landlords on their tenants; but it manifested itself in the Agrarian Land League, boycotting, and finally assassination of opponents. The aim of the Agrarian League, or more properly its pretext, was to lower the rents by law. But it had since developed into something much more sinister: a secret society whose aim was to eject the English altogether, and to establish Irish Home Rule by force and violence.

The Holy See had considerable sympathy with the original aim of the League—to lower the rents by law—and it listened attentively to the various pleas from Irish Catholic prelates. Typical is the following from Archbishop Croke of Cashel, printed in the *Catholic Times* of Liverpool (24 December 1880):

> "The laws which at present regulate relations between proprietor and farmer are a crying injustice, calculated to enslave the people and impoverish the country. . . . Is it right that a landlord should be able to evict a tenant who is unable to pay his rent as a result of a bad harvest, and who is then forced to go out and die on the highway? All the evils in Ireland spring from these laws, which hold three million Catholic Irishmen in vile and slavish thrall to 10,000 English landlords, who rarely permit them to raise themselves above a most abject state of poverty."[3]

On a lower level in the Irish priesthood was Father Gauly who wrote,

> "Houses have been desolated, whole families cast out in a piercing cold winter. The chains of landlord thralldom have been so closely riveted on the people's festering limbs that they scarce have the strength to burst them asunder. And all this because the English Government allows unlimited power in the hands of a monster called Lord Leitrim. In a remote district called Finney you will find a ruined and roofless chapel, with the poor people kneeling outside when the Holy Mysteries are offered up. And who reduced this chapel to its present state? They will tell you—

[1] Vatican Secret Archives, Segretario di Stato, 1883, Rubrica 278 (Fascicoli 1–3), *Relations with Ireland*. The material in this article comes from this Rubrica, unless otherwise stated.

[2] The origin of "the Troubles" may be traced to that fateful day in 1165 when the only English Pope in history, Adrian IV, in the feudal manner of those times "donated" Ireland to Henry Plantagenet. It was to prove one of the most disastrous donations in history.

[3] Foreign Office, 45/407, Rome, 16 October 1880. Despatch from Mr Macdonell (English chargé d'affaires accredited to the Italian government) to Lord Granville, the English Foreign Secretary.

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Lord Leitrim! The tribute which this man, and those like him, demands in the form of rents is enormous. The little of the soil of their forefathers which remains to the people is now rackrented to a pitch which has reduced the unfortunate occupiers to perennial paupers. Their cattle, pigs, fowls, eggs, milk and butter, instead of nourishing their half-starved families, are sold to make up the rent. Their very clothes are pawned." [4]

EXAGGERATED as much of this language is, there was a good part of truth in it. Even the English Government recognised that legislation to control the rents must be introduced, and it was preparing to do so, in the face naturally of stiff opposition by the landlords. What the English Government would not tolerate, however, were the acts of violence and lawlessness which were increasingly accompanying these Agrarian demands. The latter were soon seen to be a pretext for the violent men, the Fenian secret society, and other desperadoes like the Moonlighters, to spread anarchy throughout the island. The English Government was convinced that the Irish Catholic clergy were encouraging, if not playing an active part in, the Fenian movement. It was at this point, when assassination had become a daily occurrence, that it appealed to Rome. Having no official relations with the Pope, the English Government had to do this indirectly, through various intermediaries—in this case through Cardinal Nina of the Rota (the department of the Vatican which deals with matrimonial problems), who was on friendly terms with a member of the English cabinet.[5]

"The Agrarian agitation", Lord Stanley wrote to Cardinal Nina (10 January 1881)

"would be of minor importance, were it not for that perpetual scourge of Ireland—the denunciation of individuals who pay their rent, followed by their assassination. Here the Catholic clergy is playing an active part against tenants who pay their rent. It is scandalous that priests should denounce such people on the very steps of the church, after they have come out of mass . . . of course, I know the Irish clergy is drawn mostly from the lower classes, and is Irish before being Catholic."

He goes on to pay a remarkable tribute, if an unconscious one, to the political power of the Pope.

"Any measures, however drastic, which the English Government may take to put an end to these outrages can have only a temporary effect. Only energetic action by the Holy See to influence the Irish clergy will succeed in purging the Irish of their penchant for assassination. . . . I am therefore insisting in the House of Lords on the need for re-establishing relations with the Holy See, and maintaining a representative of the English Government in Rome—as the only means of influencing the Irish clergy. For the English Government has absolutely no hold over them. . . ." [6]

Something of the violence he refers to is described in a report in the Vatican Secret Archives based on an address given by Mr Justice Fitzgerald to the Munster Winter Assizes in Cork (8 December 1880):

"I shall confine myself to the four months in this county since the last session. I shall also exclude from immediate consideration ordinary offences such as sheep and cattle stealing, robbery, larceny etc, *which could happen anywhere.* In County Clare in this period, there have been 43 cases of anonymous letters threatening to kill tenants who have paid their rent, to maim their cattle and to set fire to their farms. In Limerick, the cattle maiming has been of a most brutal nature. One blushes for a country in which the broken prong of a pitchfork is driven into the side of a horse, from which the poor animal dies. In the East Riding of Cork there have been 51 threatening letters, 22 cases of arson, 39 of cattle maiming, and a number of murderous assaults on landlords' bailiffs. Lord Shannon's steward was murdered on the highroad for 'spying on behalf of the English Government' by a man who had lain in wait for him for five hours disguised as a woman. He had hidden a blunderbuss under his skirt."

THE ATTITUDE of the Holy See towards all this was expressed in an article in *Osservatore Romano* (25 December 1880): "In the heat of the strife, it is the supreme duty of the clergy and the Irish people to show that *even in defence of legitimate interests*, the sons of the Church should separate themselves from the revolutionary movement, not forgetting a fundamental principle of the Catholic religion—that the end does not justify means which are anarchical and reproved by conscience."

These sentiments were repeated in a Pontifical letter to the Archbishop of Dublin, in which Leo XIII exhorted the Irish to do nothing contrary to the obedience due to the legitimate authorities. Ireland, he wrote, will more easily obtain what she

[4] *Irish World* (published in America), 11 December 1880.

[5] A most unsatisfactory form of diplomatic intercourse. But England had broken off official relations with the Holy See after Mary Tudor's death.

[6] His hopes of official relations being re-established were not to be fulfilled until 1914—and then only partly, with a British Minister at the Vatican, and still no Papal representative in London.

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wants, if she remains within the limits of the law.[7] In the dealings which he now undertook with Ireland (as later with Germany, Poland and France), Leo XIII proved to be an accomplished diplomat. Entirely without the fiery intransigence of his predecessor, Pius IX, his aim was to encourage between the Catholic populations of these countries and their rulers—however hostile to the Church the latter might be—a policy of compromise and mutual understanding.

His statements were much appreciated by the English Government. On 6 August 1883, George Errington, MP, wrote to the Vatican Secretary of State:

> "The effect produced by the Pontifical letter has been quite excellent. The English people who until now believed that the Catholic Church was almost an accomplice in the crimes being committed in Ireland, *has now entirely changed its mind.* It is now aware that the Pope is himself exposed to Irish attacks, for having defended justice and condemned crime. The English Government fully appreciates the influence which can be exercised by the Holy See, and I am instructed to convey its appreciation to Your Eminence." [8]

HOW FAR WAS the Irish priesthood involved in the violence?

As early as 1843 Lord Aberdeen, the English Foreign Secretary, had complained to the Holy See about "the mischievous agitation being carried on by the Roman Catholic priesthood in Ireland." On this occasion his complaint had to go through our Ambassador in Vienna, Sir R. Gordon, who asked Prince Metternich to forward it to the Holy See.[9] In it Lord Aberdeen hoped that "the Holy See will exert the authority which it undoubtedly possesses in Ireland to discountenance this agitation", and he forwarded a collection of violent speeches and addresses delivered by Irish Catholic priests in that year, emphasising that *"many of them were pronounced from the pulpit."* He added that it was difficult to imagine any conduct more outrageous and directly in violation of all their duties as Ministers of the Gospel of Peace, and he asked the Austrian Government to bring this to the attention of the Pope.

"It is our conviction", he said, "that all governments have an interest in common with us in discouraging the revolt of ecclesiastics against the lawful authority of their sovereign. Such conspiracies are not only disgraceful to religion, but are dangerous to other thrones, as well as that of England."

There appears to have been little response on this occasion from Gregory XVI, who was approaching the end of his Pontificate. He might well have exclaimed—so, the English who have for three centuries scorned the Papacy now want our help! But nine years later when Sir Henry Bulwer, who happened to be in Rome, contrived to obtain an audience with the Cardinal Secretary of State, Antonelli, he was better received. Sir Henry referred to the "violent and indecorous language employed by the Irish clergy who are using their religious influence for political ends." Antonelli said that the Pope (Pius IX, who had just returned from exile in Gaeta) strongly deprecated such language and behaviour. Indeed His Holiness considered the conduct of the Irish clergy during the recent elections most reprehensible. Pius IX had instructed them not to support the Tenants' League bill, which he considered an attack on private property and civil rights.

The Irish Bishops and clergy appear to have paid little heed to Pius IX's admonitions; for by 1869 the situation was so out of hand that Odo Russell (who was *unofficial* English representative to the Holy See from 1860–1870) asked Cardinal Antonelli for the suspension of two particularly pernicious clerical trouble-makers, who openly supported the Fenian movement,[10] Fathers Lavelle and Ryan. The former had stated in press articles that it was no more criminal to kill an opponent of the Agrarian League than it was to kill a burglar who had broken into one's house, while Father Ryan said, "The people must kill the landlords as one kills partridges in September."

Antonelli replied that the Pope had in a recent Bull of Censure condemned *all* secret societies, and that this *ipso facto* included the Fenians.[11] Odo Russell considered that this was not enough. He suggested that the Pope should go to the root of the matter with some more explicit statement, an ex-

[7] F.O. 45/407, Rome, 4 January 1881. Sir A[ugustus]. Paget to Lord Granville.

[8] Another example of the hole-and-corner methods which the English Government had to resort to to communicate with Rome. Errington was the Member of Parliament for Longford. A Catholic who frequently wintered in Rome, he was in touch with influential Church dignitaries there, and he was used from time to time by the English Government as an unofficial contact with the Vatican. See: *Ireland and Anglo-Papal Relations 1850–85*, by C. J. Woods, in *Irish Historical Studies* (January 1968).

[9] F.O. 45/661, Vienna, 15 November 1843. Despatch from Sir R. Gordon.

[10] The Fenians were a secret society founded in the USA for committing assassination (similar to the IRA Provisionals today); they were known in the vernacular as *Clan-na-gael.*

[11] Later, the Pope made this more explicit. In a letter to Mgr Edward McCabe, Bishop of Dublin, he wrote (1 August 1882):

> "Every good man should keep away from secret societies. They are powerless to obtain what the people rightly demand. Too often they incite to crime decent, honest people who are dazzled by their allurements."

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Cathedra condemnation of the Fenians specifically. Again very little was done, partly no doubt because in that year, 1869, the Pope was fully occupied with troubles nearer home; his patrimony was just about to be seized by the new Italian state. It was not until his successor, Leo XIII, had been on the throne nearly ten years that it became clear that only a Papal Legate, a plenipotentiary of the Pope sent specially to Ireland to report on the situation, and the role played by the priests in the violence, would make the Irish clergy pay any heed to Papal instructions. It was now that the services of Mgr Ignazio Persico were called upon.

BEFORE HE SET OUT as Papal Legate in July 1887, Mgr Persico was briefed on the situation. Here, the Vatican relied largely on its most recent report, from the Archbishop of Westminster, Mgr Laird Patterson (from London on 30 June 1887), who was a strong supporter of the English Government.

"The government has irrefutable proof", Mgr Patterson said, "that the so-called Agrarian League *supported by numerous priests* is exercising a terror based on threat, violence and assassination. Many meetings of the League are not only frequented by priests, but presided over by them." He then made the important point that the treatment of Catholics in England itself was now exemplary; since Catholic emancipation in 1829, every trace of persecution had vanished. But the Irish situation, if not properly handled, might undo all the improvements of the last sixty years.

"Lord Salisbury himself", wrote the Archbishop, "the descendant of Cecil and Burleigh, stated only two years ago most generously that the English are ashamed of their persecution of the Catholics in the past. That is the general attitude in England today. But now, with this behaviour of the Irish priests—how long will this favourable attitude continue? It is a long time since we heard in England the fanatical cry, 'Down with Popery!' But if these Irish Catholic priests go on behaving as they do, we may well hear it again."

This placed the Vatican in something of a quandary. For as George Errington reported from Rome (26 December 1881), the Irish community in the Eternal City was divided into two sects: those who sympathised with the Agrarian League and the Home Rulers, and who therefore condoned or ignored its excesses; and those who realised how serious the consequences could be for Catholics in England, who were at last being treated well, if the Pope showed any sympathy for the Agrarian League.

> "The latter group in Rome [wrote Errington] are fortunately the more numerous. But the former do everything in their power to convince His Holiness that the Agrarian agitation is legitimate, and that the alleged violence in Ireland is greatly exaggerated by the English press. So you see, between these two influences, it is not easy for the Pope to choose his way. The troubles he had when he took sides recently in the Belgian affair have made him very chary about risking a similar experience."

Mgr Persico was thus made well aware at the outset of the responsibility which rested on him. The Pope could not accept the English Government's assertions at their face value; nor could he accept those of their Irish adversaries. Passions on both sides were too high. As always throughout Papal history, the Legate's task was to adjudicate. From his report the Pope would make, or not make, the ex-Cathedra pronouncement which the English Government was so anxious to obtain. For it was recognised in Rome that the report from the Archbishop of Westminster might, emanating as it did from an Englishman, be biased. Mgr Persico's instructions were: "To clarify what really is the part played by the Irish clergy, whether in the Agrarian League or in the Boycotting Committee. In addition, to exhort the Irish Bishops to direct and moderate as far as possible the action of the clergy in proper observation of the norms laid down in 1882." A further, more personal instruction was "to avoid as far as possible accepting private invitations to stay, and to prefer hotels." Nor was he to frequent public meetings, if this could be avoided.

MGR PERSICO did not relish the task, but he was a man of faith and determination. As he wrote at one point during his six-month stay in Ireland, when things were going badly, "Neither the Irish press campaign nor the hostility to my person will deter me, preoccupied as I am with the prestige of His Holiness, and the mission with which he has entrusted me. . . ."

He arrived in Dublin on 7 July 1887, and in his first despatch to the Cardinal Secretary of State Rampolla, he stated that he was finding it extremely hard to follow the instruction about not accepting invitations. He had intended staying at the Gresham Hotel; but the Archbishop of Dublin, Mgr Walsh, had immediately given a lavish reception for him, and insisted on his staying in the Bishop's Palace.

"Mgr Walsh said that if I did not stay with him", reported Mgr Persico, "it would not only diminish his own standing, but make an extremely bad impression on the public. I made excuses, but he was so insistent that I thought it better not to start on a dissenting note."

HE STAYED A WEEK in Dublin. It was the most agreeable part of his six months in Ireland,

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for he was warmly welcomed on all sides and everyone, whatever their politics, appeared anxious to help him. He was visited by all classes of the population, and received a large and enthusiastic daily correspondence. He reports that "a dozen land-owning Lords have invited me to stay, some of them having come over specially from England for the purpose." He did his best to refuse their invitations, but was not always successful. Hospitality was also offered to him by Irish nationalist politicians. In every part of the population, he wrote, he was aware of "the great love of these people for the Holy Father", and he realised how deeply religious the Irish were.

"I must add", he says in a despatch after he had left Dublin, "that to all the professions of respect for the Holy Father from various Catholic episcopates and laity must be added that of the aristocracy, even in its Protestant variety...." When he wrote this, he had just spent two nights on the estate of Lord Emly. He also received an invitation from Lord Salisbury, in which the British Foreign Secretary said he hoped he might have the pleasure of receiving the Papal Legate privately when he passed through London at the end of his Irish tour. All these overtures were a remarkable comment on the power and influence of the Pope.

During his week in Dublin, Mgr Persico was able to form some impression of his host Mgr Walsh, the Archbishop of Dublin. "A most knowledgeable man", he wrote, "with a nimble wit, and a great worker." But he added, with the first touch of that critical perception which was to mark all his despatches, "The public meets the Archbishop daily—not in person, but in the newspapers, either in the form of letters to the editor, or in articles. The latter deal mostly with political and literary matters, rarely with religious ones." He was later to write a good deal more critically of the Archbishop of Dublin.

But he still had favourable comments at his next port of call, Belfast. To Cardinal Rampolla he reported on 3 August 1887:

> "Here at the bulwark as it were of Protestantism, where only a few years ago bloody battles were regular between protestants and Catholics, all is—praise be to God!—quiet and orderly. The representative of the Pope can walk the streets in the popular quarter surrounded by signs of respect and deference."

And he refers to "the ever-growing confidence here in the action of the Holy Father."

HE NOW WENT SOUTH, to Rochestown, Co. Cork, where he first became aware of the pressures which would be exerted on him as he proceeded—in this case from the English Government side, in the person of a certain Captain Ross of Bladensburg, whose attentions were most pressing. This officer was a friend of the Duke of Norfolk, whom he regularly accompanied as attaché to Rome on visits to the Pope.

> "Captain Ross [wrote Mgr Persico] is one of the most ardent supporters of the English landlords in their struggle with the Irish people. He has for years been travelling unceasingly between London, Rome and Dublin, and I have reason to believe he is a secret agent of the English Government. He has sorely tried my patience. He has insisted on imposing himself on me as much as possible ever since my arrival. God alone knows how careful I have to be, and on my guard, with him. It is clear that when he is next in Rome with the Duke of Norfolk, he will move Heaven and Earth to obtain a condemnation of the Agrarian League from His Holiness. May I be frank with Your Eminence and suggest that, should the Holy Father consider some pronouncement, it will not be based on the advice of this man—nor for that matter on that of the Duke of Norfolk, whose servant he is. These people are too jaundiced."

Among the Catholic fraternity of England, Mgr Persico discovered that there were two groups, diametrically opposed on the Irish question: one, the Duke of Norfolk's group, supported the English Government and the Union; the second, an equally powerful group of distinguished Catholics including the Marquess of Ripon, the Earl of Ashburnham, Sir Henry Bedingfeld, Mr Henry Petre, etc., were Home Rulers, in favour of what they called "Irish national aspirations." A letter from the second group to Mgr Persico not long after his arrival in Ireland explains their attitude:

> "We cannot doubt that the result of your stay in Ireland will reassure you completely as to the legitimate and reasonable nature of Irish national aspirations, the denial of which we hold to be the principal cause of all the misery and distress in that island today. You will at the same time have been consoled by observing the Apostolic wisdom which characterises the Irish episcopate, the zeal which animates their clergy, the piety which distinguishes the whole Irish people."

Mgr Persico had little sympathy with either of these groups. Of the Duke of Norfolk's group he wrote in a despatch from Cork (18 November 1887),

> "They want the Holy Father to lift up his voice to condemn the Irish Bishops and clergy. They remind me of those disciples of Our Lord who asked him to call down fire from Heaven, and destroy the Samaritans. They forget that the Holy Father is shepherd of *all* his sheep, that every one is dear to him, and shall not go astray. They also forget how much the Irish have suffered, and how much they are suffering now, at the hands of the English!"

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He stayed some time in Rochestown, Co. Cork, where—no doubt as a reverse result of the pressure applied on him by Captain Ross—his natural inclination was at first to sympathise with the Home Rulers. To Cardinal Rampolla he reported on 10 December 1887, "I must tell you that the state of this country is getting worse, due to the increasingly repressive measures being introduced by the English Government. And the numerous arrests of perfectly respectable persons, made on the most preposterous grounds. It would seem as if the English Government wishes to provoke the Irish people into acts of rebellion. . . ." He was here referring to the Coercion Act which the English Government had just passed. In its name, many arrests were made on the simple testimony of a policeman, and condemnation pronounced with no more authority. Several Irish MPs found themelves in gaol in this way, as did the Mayor of Dublin, for having published the account of a proscribed Agrarian League meeting.

Nevertheless, Mgr Persico was determined to be objective, aware that the rights and wrongs of the Agrarian situation did not concern him directly, but that the part the Catholic clergy were playing in it did. From Cork, a few days later, he reported sadly on this:

> "I fear that the clergy, instead of trying to calm the passions, are bent on stirring them up. The violence of language employed by some of the priests exceeds that even of the nationalists. Nor have I heard any condemnation of this language by the Irish Episcopate."

Having warned the Vatican against heeding the advice of Captain Ross when that officer came to Rome, he now warned against a representative of the other side, the Augustinian monk Father Patrick Glynn of Cork, who was also shortly coming to Rome to present the Irish case, and hoping for an audience with the Pope.

"Father Glynn should not be listened to", says Mgr Persico, "because he is one of the priests most guilty of violent language on the hustings." He had also learnt that Father Glynn was strongly opposed to his own mission to Ireland, which he thought most suspicious.

AFTER STAYING IN a number of cities and towns—Longford, Sligo, Queenstown, Londonderry—Mgr Persico began to form some opinion of the Agrarian League's *Plan of Campaign*. This title sounded innocuous enough but, as he says,

> "The so-called *Plan of Campaign* is nothing less than open military action, a weapon of war. I can only liken it to the extreme measures employed when a citadel has been under siege for a long time, and the only way to take possession of it is to starve the inhabitants out. The principal weapon employed in the *Plan of Campaign* is the Boycott. This is a kind of civil excommunication, which isolates the denounced person who has agreed to pay the landlord his rent, so that no one will have anything to do with him. No shopkeeper will serve him, no artisan, plumber, carpenter or peasant will render him service, in the house or on the land. The result is that a number of tenants who were prepared to pay their revised rents have been terrorised into contributing *to the Land League the moneys owed to the landowner*. What is particularly scandalous about this is that in some cases the denounced tenant is deprived of his place in church, and his children are refused religious instruction by the local priest! Equally scandalous—to see a number of priests in the audience at the *Plan of Campaign* meetings. Moreover, these meetings generally take place on Sundays, immediately after Mass, so that the priests can go directly from the altar to the political platform. I will refrain from quoting the language some of them use on these platforms, particularly the younger priests. They degrade their sacred Ministry, and give the worst example to the population."

Of the young priests in the College of Maynooth, Mgr Persico wrote, "They are full of the spirit of revolution. Instead of acting as Ministers of Peace, they sow discord among the classes. They oppose civil authority, and refuse to pray for the Queen. These young priests give lessons in Socialism, but I found them very ignorant of the elements of practical economy. . . ." He also described three young priests on the platform at a political meeting applauding when the speaker said, "If Christ himself came down on this platform and dared to oppose the Land League, he would be whistled out of the room."

Mgr Persico then gave some examples of boycotting in which priests were involved. He reported that a certain Mr Morris, a landowner in Ballinaboy, had been boycotted, and that anyone who continued to work for him was threatened with violence. "Nevertheless last Monday", Mgr Persico reports,

> "some of Mr Morris's tenants volunteered to cut turf for him. They had been engaged on this for about two hours, when a priest appeared accompanied by a large following armed with sticks and stones. The frightened tenants ran off, but they were pursued by the priest's attendants, who overtook them and gave them a sound thrashing. After all the turf that had been cut had been thrown in the river, the priest returned to Ballinaboy bearing in triumph a number of the tenants' spades which he had 'confiscated.'

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These he gave as symbols to the local branch of the Agrarian League."

In a second instance of boycotting, Mgr Persico reported that

"Mr Fitzjames, a Roman Catholic gentleman residing about three miles from Six Mile Bridge, Co. Clare, is being savagely boycotted. This is encouraged and sanctioned by the priests in the diocese of Killaloe, and has culminated in his being fired on, and seriously wounded, on the public highway. This infamous persecution still continues, and obliges him to be accompanied permanently by an armed guard of two constables."

THE PAPAL LEGATE'S NEXT STOP was the Diocese of Kerry, the home of the "Moonlighters."

"The state of this diocese", he reports, "is one of languor, not to say apathy. The clergy display few commendable virtues, and appear mesmerised by the Moonlighters. These latter, who claim to be part of the Agrarian League, are in reality nothing more than professional criminals and brigands. The country lends itself to their activities, because it is mountainous, and a large part is wooded and inaccessible. Under the leadership of various *condottieri*, these ruffians specialise in highway robbery and homicide, and they terrorise the local population. The Bishop of the diocese, Mgr Andrew Higgins, is a frigid, indecisive man, who says he has withdrawn completely from politics. This is a matter for congratulation; but it is said that it derives more from fear of the Moonlighters than anything else."

Mgr Persico had little better to say about the Bishop of the neighbouring diocese of Waterford and Lismore, Mgr Piers Power, whom he described as "neither young in body nor nimble in spirit, and dedicated, I fear, to spirituous liquors."

Mgr Persico spent five months in this way, visiting every diocese in the island, in a tour of such thoroughness that some of the Bishops began to be apprehensive. They would have been even more apprehensive had they known what he wrote about them. Of the Diocese of Dromore, he wrote:

"The Bishop here, Mgr Pius Leahy, has governed the diocese for 35 years. Not only is he advanced in years, but he has for some time been paralysed, and is not always in his right mind. Last year he was given a coadjutor to help him, Mgr Thomas McGovern. But—would you believe it?—the old man insists on keeping all control of the diocese in his own hands, leaving to Mgr McGovern only the benedictions and sanctifications."

It was much the same in the Diocese of Killaloe, which was also ruled by old men:

"The Bishop here is Mgr Michael Flannery, who has been in charge for thirty years. Decrepit and a permanent invalid, he has been absent from the diocese for several years, and is at present resident in Paris. In 1872 he was given a coadjutor, Mgr James Ryan, another old man suffering from paralysis. One may say therefore that this diocese is virtually without a Bishop. One result of this is that the priests have let themselves go in the matter of politics. Several of them are seriously compromised by speeches they have made at public meetings."

Of the Diocese of Cloyne he wrote, "The Bishop here is afflicted with almost total deafness. Consequently, the clergy are not supervised as they should be, and are left very much to their own devices. The construction of a sumptuous cathedral here has absorbed all the diocesan funds for years, so that many essential parish matters are totally neglected."

In the Diocese of Clonfort the Bishop, Mgr Patrick Duggan, is also

"advanced in years, and he will not allow his coadjutor, Mgr Healey, jurisdiction over any but the smallest matters. The two men are in fact very ill suited to one another. Mgr Duggan is not only an ardent nationalist, but a bitter enemy of the English government and the upper classes; while Mgr Healey is a convinced Conservative, who likes to dine at the tables of the English aristocracy. Mgr Duggan is evincing signs of mental aberration, and I would say he is virtually insane. He should be removed; but he says he will not budge as long as Mgr Healey remains."

The Papal Legate criticised these Bishops largely on account of their age and decrepitude which—he admits—is hardly their fault. But he finds some of the younger Bishops, alert and active men, reprehensible on other grounds.

HE HAD ALREADY REFERRED to Archbishop Walsh of Dublin, who had entertained him on his arrival in Ireland. Now he has seen more of him.

"The Archbishop of Dublin", he wrote, "is an openly avowed nationalist and Home Ruler, closely linked with Parnell and the *Plan of Campaign*. His forceful character has imposed him on most of the Irish clergy, who are terrified of him. Woe to any Bishop who does not think like the Archbishop of Dublin! He loves to breathe the aura of popular acclaim, and to be the idol of the people. I should say he lacks the pastoral spirit and dignity necessary in a man of his exalted position, because he is concerned more with politics than with religion."

Another Bishop equally compromised in politics

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was Archbishop Croke of Cashel and Emly, of whom the Papal Legate wrote,

> "He has excellent qualities of heart, but is one of the most ardent nationalists and a bitter opponent of the English. He claims to defend the rights of the Irish common people, but in this defence he goes too far, with frequent letters to the press couched in a language unsuitable for a high ecclesiastical dignitary. He could do great things as Archbishop, but his mania for politics outweighs his good qualities. . . ."

In the diocese of such a Bishop the clergy were naturally politically minded too, and Persico adds, "Several of his priests are seriously compromised. In particular, a junior curate named Matthew Ryan who has published a widely read work entitled *The Sacred Duty of Revolution*. He is for ever holding forth violently against the English. And Archbishop Croke never calls him to order."

Archbishop Croke's most notorious political intervention was, he reports, over the "Manchester Martyrs." These were three Irishmen, Messrs Allan, O'Brian and Larkin, who had attempted to dynamite their way into Manchester gaol to free some prisoners. There was a tussle, in the course of which a warder was killed. The three were tried and hanged for murder. Archbishop Croke immediately wrote a public letter of condolence about the "Martyrs" to their families, and inaugurated a fund for a sepulchral monument to be erected to them in Limerick, contributing the first £20 himself. This caused a great outcry in England, and did the Catholic cause there much harm.

ARCHBISHOP CROKE of Cashel and Archbishop Walsh of Dublin both supported the Agrarian League but they did not, curiously, share the same views about its female counterpart, the Ladies' Land League. These were a group of charitable upper-class women who ministered to the needs of poor families whose husbands were in prison, or otherwise in distress on account of the agrarian situation. Archbishop Walsh must have made insinuations about the morals of these ladies—although in what precise respect is not clear from the document in the Vatican Secret Archives. Archbishop Croke of Cashel rallied to their defence in an open letter to the press, challenging "the monstrous imputation cast upon the character of these good ladies by the Archbishop of Dublin."

> "These noble ladies who have in the spirit of Christian charity, allied with love of country, given their humble aid solely to relieve the wives and children of evicted or imprisoned peasants. They know only what is pure, modest and lovely—in a word what is womanly. The Archbishop of Dublin is entirely unjustified in publicly insulting and wronging some of the most exemplary and devoted daughters of the Church, known to their pastors as models of every virtue that exalts and adorns the Christian woman. In future, I hope His Grace will think twice about using his lance so freely."

MGR PERSICO dealt with some 30 dioceses, and, in contrast to what he had to say about the Irish Bishops and clergy, he speaks highly of the Irish people whom he met on many social levels.

"In its heart of hearts, it is Catholic and sound. If this people errs, it is not due to anti-Christian sentiments, but to the force of circumstances, and to the ardent and impetuous Irish temperament. I would say more—that because the people are so religious, the future of Ireland is in the hands of the priests; and that if the people have gone astray, it is the fault of the priests, because the Irish people instinctively follow their religious leaders. Their attitude is, 'If the priest does not condemn what I do, then my conscience is clear and I can do it'. . . ."

He then refers to how this Irish people has achieved so much since the Catholic Emancipation of 1829.

> "In fifty years the progress it has made is remarkable—not only in the number of new churches but in the many fine Catholic buildings of all kinds, schools, libraries, charitable institutions. They are to be seen on every side, as much in the countryside as in the towns. No Irish parish today is without its Catholic schools, for both sexes."

He adds that a large part of the funds for this construction comes from the Irish in America, who deserve great credit for their help. But in general, and particularly in politics, he deprecates the influence of America in Irish affairs, on account of their "socialistic bias."

We may here recall that the United States, regarded today as the great bastion of conservatism, was a hundred years ago considered almost revolutionary, its republicanism in marked contrast with the monarchical system then ruling Europe.

> "The excessive liberty in the United States [writes Mgr Persico], as well as its anti-social and revolutionary principles, constitutes a continuous and very potent incentive to the Irish, who maintain close and intimate relations with the American people. The reason for this, of course, is the emigration to America of so many Irish at the time of the famine. These Irish immigrants have absorbed the revolutionary and socialist spirit abroad in the U.S.A., and communicated it back to their relations at home. America also forms the most important recruitment centre for the Fenian movement, whose

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emissaries are then despatched to Ireland, to suborn the people and foster violence. The American Irish send back large sums of money to build churches and alleviate the lot of the poor; but a part of it, I fear, finds its way into the pockets of the political agitators and the *Plan of Campaign*."

This accusation, of material American support and encouragement for the Fenians and the *Plan of Campaign*, was expressed less specifically but no less forcefully by the English Prime Minister, W. E. Gladstone, in a phrase famous at the time: "The present outrages in Ireland are associated with influences higher than those of the men who commit them. . . ." [12]

BY THE END OF 1887 Mgr Persico was in a position to submit a general report to Rome (from Rochestown, 10 December 1887). Summing up, he wrote:

"The bane of this country today is that political agitators have acquired almost complete power over the population. Some of the farmers would be quite prepared to pay the revised rents, but do not dare to do so because of the terror weighing on them. The Fenian agitation, based originally on just causes and having as its object certain perfectly legitimate reforms for rent, has—under the influence of an intransigent and revolutionary element—taken quite a different course, and is now accompanied by acts of violence of every kind. This agitation repudiates all the reforms it originally demanded, and attacks Property, Religion and the order of Society. It has spread its influence among a people which is fundamentally virtuous but easily inflamed, so that it has penetrated *even among the women and children.*

"The Fenian leaders make no secret of their hostility to Catholicism. However, as long as the priest is prepared to march with them, they take advantage of him and use him; but the moment he hesitates, they execrate him and dismiss him as unpatriotic. These then are the conditions under which these ruffians will accept the cooperation of the clergy. At the beginning of the agitation, a fairly large proportion of the clergy, sympathising as always with the just demands of the people, took part in the Agrarian movement; but as soon as they perceived the real character, they began to withdraw. Several Bishops in their pastoral letters indicated to the clergy and the faithful the dangers which were threatening them; and last June, on the recommendation of the Holy See, they issued a series of eminently prudent resolutions. But unfortunately, unity has not been maintained among the Bishops. Many of them have adopted the most advanced views of the revolutionary party, and have supported them, as much by example as by words—and with what words! The chiefs of the Agrarian movement have accordingly announced in their socialist journals that the Bishops are with them, and you will even see huge advertisements on the walls in which the Bishops are quoted side by side with passages from the most revolutionary writers.

"The clergy still deludes itself that it possesses the traditional power it has exercised over the centuries; but it has, at least for the time being, lost it here. It is now following, not leading, the people. And this applies, if to a lesser degree, to the Episcopacy which, largely out of timidity, makes no attempt to swim against the political current. The Bishops entreat me to inform the Holy Father that they are acting exclusively in the interest of the poor people, and they hope the Holy Father will understand the need for the *Plan of Campaign* and the Boycotting.

"But I cannot agree with them. Everyone would have great sympathy for the Irish cause, if the means adopted to further it were different. But by the very violence of their actions, they forfeit the sympathy of all men of good will. It is my belief that if the Bishops would make a supreme effort to break away from the political agitators, they could reacquire their influence over the people; and lead them again, instead of following them."

He ends on a personal note: "I must add that my presence in Ireland, and my communication with the Irish clergy, has not been rewarded with any change in their behaviour or actions. Only the authority of the Holy Father can achieve that miracle—the conversion of the Irish clergy."

BY A STROKE OF IRONY, while he was writing this report, a number of Irish Bishops had arrived in Rome, where they were pressing for an audience with the Pope (February 1888). Among them was the irrepressible Mgr Walsh, Archbishop of Dublin. He alone can have been responsible for what now occurred.

A Catholic paper in Rome, *L'Aurore*, printed several articles about the Irish Bishops' visit, in which it reported them as saying they had been received by the Pope, who had said he fully supported the Agrarian League and its aims. These articles were immediately reproduced all over

[12] Today the same statement might be made against the present IRA Provisional outrages, except that the "higher influences", while still revolutionary and anarchical, and still using religion as a pretext, come from the East not the West.

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Ireland, where thousands of good Catholics, and hundreds of Irish priests who had until now opposed the extremists, began to revise their opinion.

The Cardinal Secretary of State Rampolla reacted immediately, in a statement categorically denying that His Holiness had said, or let be understood, any such thing. The Pope in his address to the Irish Bishops had certainly not encouraged the Agrarian League and its methods. He had suggested that they "took as a safe rule of conduct the behaviour of the Catholics in Germany, who had extracted themselves from a very difficult situation [he was referring to Bismarck's *Kulturkampf*] by adherence to that moderation, and that respect for the laws, which were the result of Our counsel and Our authority."

MGR PERSICO now began to feel uneasy in Ireland. Although no one there could have known the contents of his report, he had a feeling in this strange and uncouth land, that they had somehow sensed the gist of it.

"The same Bishops", he wrote, "who gave me such a warm welcome six months ago have completely changed. They are now cold and hostile."

To support this, he quoted an article in the Dublin *Freeman's Journal*, the principal organ of the Nationalist Party and the Home Rulers, which stated (17 December 1887) that Mgr Persico, the Papal Legate, was collaborating with the English Government, and that he had undertaken "to control the Irish priesthood by encouraging them not to oppose measures however severe introduced into Ireland by the English." In return for this—alleged the Dublin paper—the English Government had agreed to Mgr Persico's requests that England should:

> (*1*) Richly endow a Catholic University in Ireland
> (*2*) Accept a permanent envoy of the Holy See at the Court of St James (a Nunzio), while simultaneously accrediting an English Ambassador at the Vatican.

"The Unionists loudly boast", the article ended, "that with this arrangement with the Vatican, they will be able to suppress the National Party in Ireland for good."

On all this Mgr Persico commented tersely in his despatch from Cork (19 December 1887), "Of course as Your Eminence is well aware, I have entered into no such arrangements with the English Government. This sort of journalistic 'prescience' makes my task doubly difficult."

ANOTHER HOME RULE PAPER, the *Pall Mall Gazette*, also professed to know what Persico was doing. On 16 December 1887, it reported that the English Government, having failed to pacify Ireland, was now negotiating with the Vatican.

> "The English Government, baffled by the steady, passive resistance of the Irish people to its arbitrary measures, foiled in its hope that incarceration of the Irish Nationalist leaders will end the tension, and despairing of all other means of preserving the Union, has now decided to enter into a pact with the Vatican. This explains the present visit of the Papal Legate. It is an open secret that Lord Salisbury, the English Foreign Secretary, has long been contemplating a Concordat with the Vatican and that, in this design, he has the closest support of the premier lay Catholic, the Duke of Norfolk. The word has gone round in English conservative circles that the Papal Legate, Mgr Persico, is to be taken in hand, and ingratiated with every form of hospitality and deferential treatment. Whether willingly or not, Mgr Persico appears to have fallen into the trap. Thus, the English Government is using the Papal Legate as a coercionist catspaw. In short, the English Government's aim is to prevent Home Rule by Rome Rule."

IF MOST OF this "journalistic prescience" was erroneous, it was correct in one important aspect, concerning the Pope's coming Decree on Ireland.

Based on Mgr Persico's report, this Decree was now published; it pronounced unequivocally against the *Plan of Campaign* and the Boycotting. It was supported by the Encyclical *Saepe Nos* (13 August 1888). Both of these documents severely condemned the violence, with a wealth of detail which revealed the source of the Papal information as Mgr Persico. On the subject of rents—the pretext for "the Troubles"—the Decree not only condemned the withholding of rent from the landlords, but the hands into which it ultimately fell (the Agrarian League and the Fenians). Although the Decree and the Encyclical were couched in the usual periphrastic style of official Papal pronouncements, their meaning was clear enough—as the howl of fury that now went up in Ireland confirmed.

Mgr Persico wrote:

> "The Papal Decree has been received very badly in Ireland. Its subject matter is attributed to my report, and I am now under constant attack. My post is full of threatening letters, expressed in the coarsest language. Every form of vituperation is levelled at me, including the threat of lapidation. And I am sorry to have to state that the hatred which the Irish people now display towards me is also shared by the clergy. . . . I will refrain from

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quoting the language used by the Irish newspapers; and here I do not mean only attacks on my person. They write most offensively about the Holy Father himself, accusing him of being surrounded in the Vatican by the enemies of Ireland, and of having made a 'pact with England'. They therefore recommend that the Irish should henceforth consider themselves relieved from any obligation to the Holy See."

It was now that Father M'Glynn was rousing opinion against the Papal Decree in America. Only a renegade Irish priest could insult the Pope as he did. "It is no part of our religion", he cried in New York, "to engage in fulsome adulation and deification of a poor old man with one foot in the grave [Leo XIII had just celebrated his 78th birthday]—a poor, absent-minded old man surrounded by sycophants who flatter him that he is capable of arbitrating in the affairs of nations. Have you ever heard the roar of our Lion [Leo]? The Pope ought not to wear a hat which is 1,500 years old. He should be able to walk down Broadway like any plain citizen, in broad-cloth and a stove-pipe hat. And he should kick in the teeth anyone foolish enough to stoop and kiss his big toe. . . ."

It was in New York, too, that the Papal Decree was attacked in the press. Describing the two measures, *The Plan of Campaign* and Boycotting, as the only arms available to the Irish peasantry against the oppression of the English landowners, *The Sun* wrote (28 April 1888), "The Pope of Rome is supposed to be superior to other mortals on account of his transcendental knowledge and spirituality. His latest Decree has utterly refuted this, and disillusioned those who believed that he was possessed of political sagacity and states-manship."

IT IS NOT CLEAR from the reports in the Vatican Secret Archives for the years 1887–88 (Rubrica 278, Fascicoli 1–3), which contain all the material about the Persico mission, when precisely Mgr Persico left Ireland. For six months, his despatches all bear an Irish address; but then in late December 1887, it is Teignmouth in Devon. It is understandable that he would want to leave a country where he was being subjected to such insults and threats. Moreover, he was suffering from arthritis, and he no doubt chose the south coast of Devon as the mildest part of England in winter.

Certain circles in England were dismayed that he had left Ireland, and in particular the Catholic group headed by the Duke of Norfolk. The Duke wrote to Cardinal Rampolla from North Berwickshire, urging

"The prime importance of Mgr Persico remaining in Ireland to complete his good work there . . . in order to bring to a happy issue the wise measures recommended by the Holy Father. It is of the utmost importance that a Legate should remain in Ireland with plenipotentiary powers. It is equally important that the Legate should be Mgr Persico. If another prelate were sent, the Irish would assume that His Holiness had had second thoughts about Mgr Persico's report."

Mgr Persico himself was understandably not enthusiastic about returning to Ireland. To Cardinal Rampolla he wrote, "There is absolutely no point in my returning. It would only arouse further suspicion against the Holy Father. They would say I am interfering again and it would, I am sure, produce a conflagration. The representative of the Holy Father would be exposed to a thousand insults. In fact they would stone me."

These are strong words; he goes on, "Your Eminence is aware that all the missions I have undertaken on behalf of the Holy Father have been arduous. But none can compare with this one in Ireland, a veritable Calvary."

His last place of residence had been Pontypool, where he took refuge with the Capuchin friars. "But the attacks on me became more and more violent, so that I feared my presence might jeopardise the Fathers. I felt I must leave there too. So as not to expose myself to further outrages, I was strongly advised to leave Ireland for England." He was by now thoroughly sick of politics and, being a deeply religious man, requested permission to visit Lourdes on his way home.

BUT THE VATICAN intended to make use of his services while he was in Great Britain, and he was instructed to proceed immediately to Scotland, to report on the San Benedetto monastery at Fort Augustus, near Aberdeen. This was a real penance for a man suffering from arthritis, and indisposed to northern climates even in summer. But he dutifully undertook the disagreeable journey from Devon to these Hyperborean regions, in the rains and fogs of a British winter. "To reach this place", he wrote when he arrived at Fort Augustus on 29 March 1888, "I had to traverse the entire length of England, and Scotland too, and I am now in the extreme north, in a state of exhaustion." He added that the damp climate has aggravated his arthritis. But he duly wrote his report on the Benedictine monastery, and then took a day off to join a pilgrimage to the Isle of Iona, "in honour", he writes, "of St Columba, the apostle of these parts."

His health was deteriorating, and Rome at last took pity on him. One of the last documents in Rubrica 278 is a reply from Cardinal Rampolla to the Duke of Norfolk's second request that Mgr Persico should return immediately to Ireland. In it

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Cardinal Rampolla says politely but firmly that Mgr Persico had done his work well in Ireland, and that he is returning to Rome for reasons of health.

WHAT CAN BE LEARNT FROM this exercise in Papal diplomacy?

First, that the Pope's prestige among a religious people like the Irish, and with it his invisible influence over Irish politics, is considerable. Everybody wanted Mgr Persico on their side when he arrived, and not for his *beaux yeux*. The jubilation in England—and dismay in Ireland—with which the Pope's Decree was greeted confirm this. That there was no immediate result politically (Home Rule did not come until 1921) is beside the point. The Pope had condemned the methods employed by the Agrarian League, even if they were in theory directed to desirable ends; he had also condemned the immixture of priests in politics. As a result of his Decree, the violence diminished—not to erupt again on the same scale until the general European explosion of 1914—as did the number of priests openly supporting the Agrarian League.

In a completely different field, Mgr Persico's mission revealed the diplomatic disadvantages for England of having no official relations with the Holy See. Had these existed, a *Concordat* could have been reached by which the English government would have played a considerable part in the nomination of Irish Bishops. It is not in the interests of any state for its subjects to be administered ecclesiastically by aged and decrepit men, as Mgr Persico's report revealed. Not having the advantage of the advice of Ireland's rulers (the English Government) in the matter, the Vatican had no alternative but to accept the advice of the Irish episcopate for creating new Bishops, an episcopate itself in a degenerate condition. Moreover, the method of communicating with the Vatican, through a Parliamentary intermediary such as Mr Errington, or by the even more circuitous course through the British Ambassador in Vienna and the Austrian Government, was clumsy and dilatory.

At this time too, when the British Empire was the greatest power in the world, most of the Catholic Bishops in that Empire had been born in Ireland, or were of Irish descent. Even in the latter case, the family surroundings in which they lived until ordination were essentially Irish, just as if they had been brought up in Tipperary or Galway. As long as no diplomatic relations existed between England and the Vatican, the nomination of these prelates lay entirely in the hands of the Catholic authorities, in Rome and Ireland. The Irish Bishops naturally advised promotion for priests who shared their political views which tended, as we have seen, to be anti-English.

Thus, unlike the monarchs and governments of countries with which *Concordats* existed, Queen Victoria and her Ministers had no say whatsoever in the selection of men who were to wield great influence over a large proportion of her subjects. There were 21 million Catholics then scattered throughout the British Empire, administered by 130 Bishops, that is more Bishops than in any other state in the world (Italy had 76); under them worked 20,000 priests. All of these prelates and their Catholic flocks were subjects of Queen Victoria, whose authority they were bound to recognise. Yet at the same time, they were Catholics and bound, if in another way, to recognise the authority of the Pope. If sovereign and subject are infallible and perfect, these two obligations need not conflict nor oppose one another. They would be like two close parallel lines, which never meet and never diverge. But as human beings are not perfect, divergencies inevitably occur. To help overcome these divergencies, what are called "diplomatic relations", or *Concordats*, have long been established between the various states of Europe and the Holy See. For three centuries, no such arrangement had existed between England and the Vatican, with results, as we have seen, equally harmful to both England and Ireland.

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How Hopeless is the Irish Problem?

Thoughts after the Pope's Visit—By KEITH KYLE

We are closed in, and the key is turned
On our uncertainty; somewhere
A man is killed, or a house burned,
Yet no clear fact to be discerned. . . .
W. B. YEATS (1923)

"THIS IS NOT", said John Paul II at Drogheda, echoing the statement made by many a visitor to Ireland in the course of the last ten years, "despite what is so often repeated before world opinion, a religious war, a struggle between Catholics and Protestants." It was a judgment endorsed with lip-smacking enthusiasm by the Provisional Sinn Fein. Of course it was not a religious struggle. It was a colonial war, which had been continuing for 810 years, having its roots in the Norman invasion of 1169—and everybody knows how colonial wars end: with victory for the liberation forces. The Sinn Fein was ready to indulge in theological disputation (though the Pope had not come to Ireland with precisely that assignment in mind). Its belief in "physical resistance" to "English occupation" was "totally in keeping with the traditional Christian teaching on the right to resist oppression"; when the Pope proclaimed both at Drogheda and at Knock his celebrated anathema of violence ("evil means can never lead to a good end; all human life is sacred; murder is murder no matter what the motive or end"), it responded slyly, with a side reference to Zimbabwe:

> "Sinn Fein would welcome clarification as to whether this teaching on the right to resist, the right to resort to legitimate revolt, and the right to engage in a just war has been changed."

The Belfast IRA, leaving such casuistry to their political wing, asserted their confidence in victory on account of "the widespread support which we know we command"; adding:

> "We know that upon victory the Church would have no difficulty in recognising us."

All have chosen, from the palimpsest of Irish history, the parts they feel called on to play. The present Sinn Fein and the present IRA are attempting to re-enact the parts their namesakes took 60 years ago. The difference is that from the parliamentary election of 1918 onwards there was an excellent case for saying that Sinn Fein had majority national support for its policies—though not explicitly for the use of violence. In the most recent elections within the Irish Republic the Sinn Fein candidates averaged 2.16% of the votes. The claim is made that they were handicapped in their campaigning by not being allowed to appear on radio or television, but the Sinn Fein of 1918 were far more severely handicapped by the British authorities.

The analogy with the Liberation War of 1919–21 is therefore somewhat forced, even though beyond the 2% who consistently show up as supporting the IRA in every opinion poll taken in the Republic, there is certainly another and wider band of "republicans", variously estimated but probably in the 15–20% range, who feel some degree of sympathy for IRA activities. The leaderships of all three of the political parties which are returned to the Dail (the Irish Republic's Parliament) are now on record in agreeing that *internal* political development of Northern Ireland must have absolute priority over the "*national* question": that is, the question of removing the boundary. Opposition to this exists to some degree in all three parties, but most noticeably in the Fianna Fail, which is not surprising since that party was founded largely to absorb a section of the IRA which fought on Eamon de Valera's side in the Civil War. Fianna Fail's programme on Northern Ireland, adopted in 1975, would commit it to a policy which the *British* Government rather than the Irish should adopt: namely, to "declare Britain's commitment to implement an ordered withdrawal from her involvement in the six counties of Northern Ireland."

That such a policy statement should be taken seriously was the alarming proposition put forward last year by the 24-year-old Sile de Valera, who because she was who she was (the granddaughter of "Dev" as well as a member both of the Dail and the European Parliament) immediately commanded headline status. In fact, from the moment his administration took office in July 1977, the then

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Taoiseach (Prime Minister), Jack Lynch, has sought by stages to disengage himself from this policy, stating that what he had in mind was not so much a British declaration of intent to withdraw, and most certainly not a declaration to withdraw by a fixed deadline; but rather a declaration of British interest in bringing about "the reconciliation of the Irish people." Miss de Valera put forward a challenging proposition: since she was saying nothing that was incompatible with fearless and outspoken fulfilment of the policy of 1975—and since Mr Lynch had never in so many words repudiated that policy—then she and Mr Lynch were saying the same thing, or would be saying the same thing if he felt able to speak his mind. The *Taoiseach* was obliged to take swift and immediate action to snuff out, for the time being, this gross presumption. But for some days the public had a glimpse of the dangers lurking not far below the surface of that phenomenon labelled by the Irish writer John Healy as "Verbal Republicanism." And a little more than two months later, Mr Lynch decided that, with one thing and another, he had had enough of the ambiguities of public life, and resigned. He gave place to Mr Charles Haughey, who trails a different set of ambiguities altogether, suggesting far more responsiveness to Sile de Valera's brand of nationalism. The new *Taoiseach*, by his reputation of ten years ago and his significant silences since, is deemed a "republican." His words on taking office about certain "changes of emphasis" after Mr Lynch invite the fiercest contention.

IT IS CHARACTERISTIC of societies in which the relations of territory to peoples and of states to nations are full of ambiguities that there is great uncertainty about the use of names. Ireland is both the sovereign state *in esse* of 26 counties, and the state *in posse* of 32 counties referred to in Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish constitution. It is also, of course, the geographic term for the whole island. A "republican" is not, on any account, someone who believes in or is a citizen of the Irish Republic; he is a person who places the reunification of Ireland ahead of other political priorities. As with the term "Verbal Republican", that might not represent much in terms of action—though sometimes rather more in terms of significant inaction. The "Republic" of which he is a willing citizen is a republic that never was and never will be—a republic of the mind, first proclaimed at the Dublin General Post Office at Easter 1916, and possessed of all the attributes of his personal dream.

The same ambiguity is observed with the word "nation" or "national." As with the present-day Germans, the Irish consider they live in a state which is not a Nation; to refer to a "*national*" issue is, therefore, to refer to an issue in which the island is treated as one. On the other hand, the boundary is so placed that most Irish concerns which are those of a plural society are corralled by it and deposited under British jurisdiction.

The ambiguity of language is reflected in the ambiguity of life. Political and Church leaders in the Republic find it difficult in everyday practice to address a society which is 98% Roman Catholic as if it were a society which, taking account of potential fellow-citizens in the North, would be Catholic only as to 76%.

WHEN ABSOLVING RELIGION of responsibility for the trouble in the pluralistic end of Ireland (the North), the Pope offered no alternative explanation and only one concrete example. The Anglican bishops had, in true ecumenical spirit,

The Exile & the Pope

THE POPE, *presumably with divine inspiration, moves in mysterious ways his triumphs to perform.*

Shortly before the Vatican completed its plans for the Papal visit to Ireland and the United States, John Paul II indicated that an old Polish colleague, the theologian Adam Boniecki in Cracow, would be the ideal correspondent for the "Osservatore Romano" to accompany him on his journey. But it is rather easier for a camel to get through the needle's eye than for a dissident Catholic intellectual to get a passport and exit visa from the Warsaw Communist authorities. Boniecki couldn't make it. Would the gentle former Archbishop of Cracow turn the other cheek?

Well, there was a press place free, and I happen to be the journalist who was turned to. I needed no exit visa, for I was living abroad in exile. At least my Polish was still passable, even if no line I have written has been published in my native land for decades.

So it came to pass that I travelled with the Pope, flew in his airplane, reported on the mass traffic jams of the "Popemobile", and each day did my Polish commentaries on the impact of the Holy See abroad. Miracle of miracles, they were transmitted heavenwards, and relayed by the communication space satellite eastwards via Munich back to Wojtyla's Cracow and my own native Warsaw. I still have no valid passport, but my words needed no return visa.

Tadeusz Nowakowski
in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*

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joined with the leaders of his own Church in an invitation (which in the event he declined) to cross the border and visit Armagh, which has since ancient times been the ecclesiastical capital of the whole of Ireland. They did meet him at Cabra Convent, in the Irish Republic, with delegations from the Presbyterian and Methodist churches. The Pope is correct in holding that the ecumenical movement has brought about some contacts and some expressions of courtesy. If one blocked one's ears to the sound of the Rev. Ian Paisley, one would, in general, be correct also in saying that among the real signs of conflict, theological argumentation is simply not to be found. But to go on to imply that religion is not the main factor in the formation of the groups in conflict is to depart from reality.

There are, it is true, reinforcing factors of economic and social motive—there is a colonialist history, dating from the period in which white overseas colonies were established in America, to explain the presence of a majority Protestant community in parts of the old Ulster Province (it originally consisted of nine counties: six are now part of Northern Ireland, and three are in the Irish Republic). But the history of Ireland has been one of waves of immigration from "the mainland" (as Britain, that rather larger island across the way, is known); and these were all assimilated to a far greater extent than the present Northern Irish Protestants' 17th-century ancestors, whose Protestantism constituted their distinguishing feature. Various other forms of identification—colonialism, economic competition, loyalty to the Crown—are accretions; without the Protestant factor, the common cultural influences of Ireland would now surely have been sufficient to soften such sharp delineations. This is not the only society to demonstrate that once religion gets into politics it proves a remarkable polarising agent. It does not require to be regularly or overtly fed with theology to retain its primacy.

Thus "the two communities" as they are politely called to avoid prejudicial descriptions, are in substance (and all exceptions granted) the Protestants and the Roman Catholics. Social institutions, themselves largely of religious origin—such as the separate schools on which the Roman Catholic Church insists—fortify the distinction, which is at least as pronounced as that which divides the linguistic groups of Belgium. One school of local commentators in Northern Ireland goes so far as to speak of a problem of "two nationalities." Northern Protestants have the psychosis of uncertain nationality: they are not sure whether they are British or Irish—or whether it is possible to be both. "We *are* the Brits", was the retort of James Molyneaux, the Official Unionist leader, to the Republican slogan of "BRITS OUT." But many Northern Protestants consider themselves Irish—they have lived in Ireland as a community for getting on for four centuries—and they do not as a whole appear to the British to be British.

The massive strength of the Protestants as a political force in Northern Ireland lies in their being essentially a working-class and lower-middle-class movement. During most of the years of Ulster self-rule at Stormont, this was concealed by the absence of elections in many of the Protestant areas, which resulted in political and social organisations being headed by a socially prominent élite. It then often seemed as though sectarian differences were being used by members of this élite to avoid the emergence of working-class politics. But in the last days of Stormont, and subsequently, Protestant political unity has been smashed and the impulse behind sectarian tribalism has come into the open: it is, after all, a movement of the masses.

There are now competing political parties, and the Rev. Ian Paisley and his followers in the Democratic Union Party have an immense popular appeal, as was shown in the recent European election. Mr Paisley's demagogy is ignited by an anti-Catholic theology which believes it is not possible to be at the same time a Roman Catholic and a Christian. He emerged into public life as a fundamentalist opponent of the Ecumenical movement, and his first threatening demonstrations were mobilised in that cause. This provokes a sharp reaction from many Unionists, who do not like their politics to be so loudly associated with dogmatics. As a political spokesman, Paisley is perhaps least representative when, for example, he attacks the Pope's visit; his election to Strasbourg as a Euro-MP was by contrast an occasion on which the people felt they could indulge their taste for the colourful in selecting the holder of a somewhat remote and unfocused position. Although it may be doubted whether he would ever be accepted as the political leader of a reunited Unionism, he has demonstrated decisively that even a minority party within the Protestant community is sufficient to keep other Protestants up to the sectarian mark. It was, for example, on the initiative of the DUP, Paisley's party, that many of the local district councils (though next to powerless, they are the only directly elected level of government operating in the Province) recently adopted resolutions in favour of an "anti-terrorist plan" which if adopted would effectively align the security forces against the entire Catholic community.

CERTAINLY THERE ARE Protestant as well as Catholic supporters of the non-sectarian Alliance Party; certainly there are some Catholics in the North who would like to remain British; certainly there are a few Protestant members of the Social Democratic and Labour Party, and every effort is made to welcome them; certainly the communities

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themselves do not welcome the description of their own politics in stark religious terms. But the outside world's habit of so describing them does not seem to be substantially wrong. Nor do the mainstream (non-Paisleyite) Presbyterians any longer see much cause for optimism in the Ecumenical movement, in terms of Roman Catholic performance.

"Our ecumenical scene, like our political", said an address handed in by the Presbyterian leaders before the meeting with the Pope, "is at a standstill if it is not in retreat. . . ." They complained that after the initial enthusiasm they had found that

> "fine words and exhortations are not matched by actions nor by movement from entrenched positions of ecclesiastical power and influence. . . ."

The immediate impact of the Pope's outstanding personality and warmth and the unqualified nature of his denunciation of violence made a pleasing impression in the North, despite Ian Paisley's efforts, but other features of his presence emphasised the wideness of the old gap. For one thing there was the official purpose of pilgrimage—the centenary of the supposed apparition of the Virgin Mary to some of the inhabitants of Knock. At the Shrine of Mary Queen of Ireland the Pope did not spare himself in his recital of a record of lifelong devotion to the Virgin and his lengthy litany of prayer to her, which produced from the Anglican Canon Edgar Turner (invited to comment by *The Irish Times*) the observation that:

> "To many this demonstrates a dangerous aberration from the faith once delivered to the Apostles. . . . [It is] clear that the more he and his fellow-Roman Catholics pile up the titles of honour to her and pray to her, the more the gap between Roman and Reformed Christians is widened."

To this may be added the emphatic papal endorsement of all the most conservative positions on matters of politically regulated conduct—civil

The Irish Gunman: Mythical Glory

Dublin

THE visit of the Pope, coming so soon after the murder of Lord Mountbatten, has prodded the Irish into a rare state of self-criticism. Anguished clerics, scholars and housewives demand in the newspaper letter columns how it can be that a people so Christian, so hospitable and so kindly could have brought forth gunmen and bombers. In answer to this rhetorical question, certain Irishmen have replied with brutal and unpopular truths.

The former Cabinet Minister Conor Cruise O'Brien wrote in The Daily Telegraph *after Mountbatten's murder that Jack Lynch's Government is stating in public that Britain must leave Northern Ireland while hoping, in private, that Britain will stay. The debunking columnist of* The Irish Times, *John Healy, has placed the blame for the IRA on those Irish historians, balladeers and mythologisers who praise the men of violence in their country's history, from 1798 to the Easter Rising:*

> **"We have glorified the gun, and we have glorified the men—in word, in song, and in history—who sought to change society by the use of force, and the gun, and the bomb.**
>
> **"Whatever it is, it is not alien to our culture, and the ideology is not an imported one: 'the lads' are entitled to wear the 'Guaranteed Irish' symbols on their anoraks all day, every day. . . .**
>
> **"The Jesuits had it right—give me the child for the first seven years and I'll give you the man. To be sure, no one expected we'd turn out gunmen. . . . But who produced the kids who became 'the lads'? . . . The mythology men are at work and the ballads give them their authenticity, and assure them of a noble future and posterity.**
>
> **"Well, you can't change a nation's culture overnight, or scrap the matrix in a decade or two. But, it is, at least, a start to try to disarm the mythologisers as much as it is to disarm the Provisional IRA. It is a rather thankless task at the best of times and now, at the worst of times, it is easier to bow our heads in shame and blame alien ideologies in our revulsion at the sight of blasted innocent bodies of an old man and his family who trusted the myth of the hospitable Irish.**
>
> **"We may as well face it, we are a poor people, poorer in our modern opulence than the starving peasants of Mayo 100 years ago, who had a greater moral right to their bomb and the bullet, but who did what they had to do, with the ballot box. . . . And, they haven't rated a decent ballad, because they had no guns and killed nobody."**

This article by Mr Healy provoked a letter from Mairin Lynch, the Prime Minister's wife, who suggested that it was treasonable.

Men like O'Brien and Healy remain a despised minority. The school history books still praise the spiritual ancestors of the IRA; the schoolchildren play as "the lads" versus "Brit soldiers", the pub ballads glory in the "rattle of the Thompson gun", while Dublin radical chic magazines like Magill *and* Hibernia *still publish attacks on "British imperialism", liberally illustrated with photographs of hooded gunmen and blazing cars—the hard pornography of hatred.*

Mixed in the Irish mind with this old hatred of the historic England, one finds an admiration and emulation of everything that is detestable about modern England. The unforgivingness and the hatred stay but the Irish are ready or eager to ditch those ancient qualities that made them so different from England; the humour, the admiration for learning, the courtesy and the conversation. Now Ireland is being anglicised.

Richard West
in THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

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divorce, artificial contraception, abortion—and the omission to discuss in any helpful way the vexed question of mixed marriages. Those who were not Roman Catholics, and did not live in a Catholic majority state in which the hierarchy was powerful and obviously subscribed to the Pope's views, would not have been exactly encouraged to agree to a political change which might result in their finding themselves in precisely that position.

ARE WE CONFRONTED, then, with complete deadlock on the political as on the economic scene, with no room at all for forward movement? Many reasons could be advanced in support of that proposition. One might just have to be patient and wait until the forces of secularism have overtaken all parts of Ireland. Yet there is an insistent demand for "a new political initiative", a demand to which the British Government has dutifully responded. The continued terrorist campaign of the Provisional IRA both paralyses political progress and prompts brave new attempts.

Ever since Field-Marshal Sir Gerald Templer's successful fight against communist guerrillas in Malaya, it has been a commonplace of such conflicts that a "political strategy" must be developed alongside the military. The armed forces consider that they are unable to win by military means alone, and neither British nor foreign public opinion would accept a deadlocked tragedy in which no ideas for political change were forthcoming. Yet no one suggests, least of all the Minister, that the new initiative is such that it is likely to limit the violence.

The British are well-versed in dealing with anti-colonial movements which have the tacit if not active support of the majority of the population; but they are obviously baffled at being confronted with an armed demand to leave a territory in which the majority of the population are passionately anxious that Britain should stay. Of course there is the argument that this majority is a majority within certain arbitrary borders that artificially separate six counties of Ireland from the remaining 26. But the democratically elected parties of the Irish Republic *all* call for a political solution in the North to precede any consideration of ultimate association between North and South. Too much harassment of the British might, they fear, cause her to leave Ireland completely before any solution is reached. At one time that might have been welcomed as "calling the bluff" of the Ulster Protestants; but there is now a much grimmer realisation that full-scale civil war would probably follow, and that its main victims would be found in Belfast's Catholic community. Even the Provisional Sinn Fein have had the effrontery to say that they do not expect the British to leave the North "in the way that the Belgians left the Congo. . . ."

THE PROBLEM WITH a new political initiative for the government of the North is that the best solution of the problem—power-sharing—has already been put forward. In 1974, however, the British were not ready to do what was necessary to see it through. Prime Minister Edward Heath thought that having cleared the Irish question out of the way at the Sunningdale Conference he could direct his attention to the challenge of the militant coal-miners; and in February he staged a general election. The fragile power-sharing barque in Northern Ireland was quickly swamped. (This was, perhaps, an example of what Tip O'Neill, Speaker of the US House of Representatives, meant when he referred in an unhappy choice of metaphor to the British habit of making "a political football" of Irish problems.) The Labour Government that followed was too slow and hesitant in trying to resist the Ulster Workers' strike as they used non-violent techniques to bring down the power-sharing Executive at Stormont.

AS A CONSEQUENCE there is no longer in existence a significant political force within the majority community which is now willing to enter into compulsory coalition with the Catholics, even without the element of the ill-fated Council of Ireland, the feature that was to establish an explicit link with the Irish Republic. In 1974, though there was no time to test the long-term effect of the Sunningdale agreement on the Provisional IRA, there was hope that the gunmen would dwindle into ineffectiveness.

There is no such hope about the new British political initiative launched at the end of November 1979. On its first page the White Paper bluntly lists "a revival of the system which obtained in the first five months of 1974" as one of those ruled out of court, together with Irish unity, restoration of the old Stormont, confederation (a solution examined in some detail by Dr Garret FitzGerald[1]), and Ulster independence, which, perhaps surprisingly, shows negligible signs of popular support. Four political parties—the Official Unionists, Mr Paisley's Democratic Unionists (DUP), the Alliance (a genuinely trans-sectarian minority), and the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) are invited to confer with the Secretary of State, Mr Humphrey Atkins.

The White Paper supplies them with "a working kit with many interchangeable pieces" out of which the four parties are invited to build up their own model of local government, or of devolution, or of

[1] Garret FitzGerald, "Ireland—Our Future Together" (Fine Gael, 1979).

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various things in between. Several illustrative models use the subjects and powers transferred in different combinations with special safeguards for the minority that run from the rather ineffective to the prescription for deadlock. There are here materials for a seminar but not, in all probability, for isolating the IRA.

Two of the four addressees of this invitation to confer hastened to turn it down: the principal Protestant party, the Official Unionists, immediately—and the principal Catholic party after 48 hours' delay, long enough to shed their party leader, Gerry Fitt, who favoured acceptance. The SDLP objected to the brutal dismissal of the two parts of the Sunningdale formula that had attractions for them—Catholics in the Cabinet and "the Irish dimension." But after the able Euro-MP Mr John Hume had taken over the leadership a formula was found and he agreed to attend the negotiations which are to start on 7 January.

The Official Unionists' new leader, James Molyneaux, is thought to be a less likely starter. Backed by Enoch Powell, he wants to replace the machinery of direct rule by that of integration, so that Northern Ireland, as a Conservative MP picturesquely put it in a recent debate, should be "just the same as Piddletrenthide or Ashby de la Zouche."

Whereas at Sunningdale the Ulster Unionists (now Official Unionists) were inside the constitutional conference and Mr Paisley was outside trumpeting like a bull, it was now the turn of Mr Paisley, who had accepted the Secretary of State's invitation, to play the moderate and responsible democrat. In the Commons debate he even had honeyed words about "the Irish dimension"—his own version of that deliberately ill-defined term—in which he sought to show that he had always supported close economic cooperation between North and South. He is hoping no doubt to inherit the support of those Official Unionists who still long for devolution and cannot understand what Messrs Molyneaux and Powell are doing with their party.

HARDLY HAD Mr Molyneaux and Mr Hume taken over their respective parties than, on 5 December, Mr Lynch resigned as *Taoiseach*. Although like all Irish leaders he had sometimes looked in the trick

Love & Hate . . . Good & Evil

Dublin

THE PROVISIONAL IRA **master bomber who horrified the world with the assassination of Lord Mountbatten was jailed for life yesterday—and showed no sign of emotion. Thomas McMahon, aged 31, was found guilty of Lord Mountbatten's murder by three judges at the anti-terrorist Special Criminal Court in Dublin.**

The loss of McMahon, whose remote-control bomb-making skills were perfected under Russian supervision during a spell of training in Libya, is a big blow to the Provisionals. Normally he made bombs for others and was not risked in the field—but the Mountbatten assassination was of such importance that he planted the bomb on the earl's boat himself.

Security officials are likely to question McMahon about the bomb that massacred 18 British soldiers at Warrenpoint, a few hours after the explosion aboard the earl's boat on August 27, which also killed Lord Mountbatten's 14-year-old grandson Nicholas, the 82-year-old Dowager Lady Brabourne and boat boy Paul Maxwell aged 15. Both were remote-control devices and both actually exploded, ironically, while McMahon was being held by police in the republic, after being stopped in a road-block.

DAILY MAIL

Carrickmacross

THE **antimacassar on the parish priest's favourite armchair in the quiet border town of Carrickmacross bears its silent testimony to the open divisions in Irish family life.**

Embroidered with a message of peace on brown and yellow lace it was sent to Monsignor Seamus Morris at Christmas by Vera McMahon, a lay missionary in Bangladesh for the international charity Concern.

Yesterday her brother Thomas's identity as a ruthless bomb-maker for the past 10 years became known.

Like most of her farming stock family, Vera is a staunch Catholic who has devoted her life to the message of peace and understanding. She is currently midway through a roving commission with the relief agency.

This basic conflict of love and hate was explained by Monsignor Morris of St. Joseph's Church who described the McMahon family as "charming" and regular church-goers. He said:

"The commitment is to the same policy. They both want a dignified Ireland. One was working with love away from home, caring for the sick and needy.

"The other is also working with love for his country. He wants a united Ireland and as far as he is concerned he was fighting the forces of evil."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

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mirror which shows Ireland now with 26 counties, now with 32, he knew quite plainly that if the border were suddenly to disappear, the Republic would not have the remotest idea how it could set about integrating a million militantly hostile fellow-citizens. That is why he always said that it was Britain's job to make them cease being militantly hostile; the Republic then might take on the responsibility of his tamed fellow-Irishmen.

It has been, since the time of the passage of the third Reform Bill through the Commons in 1912, the invariable assumption of Irish Catholics, however moderate or eminent, that if the British would only show a bit of grit and knock the Protestants into line they would become amenable. Thus Mr Lynch used to call across the boundary for "a declaration by the British Government of their willingness to encourage Irish unity."

JOHN HUME WANTS the British to withdraw "their unconditional guarantee of support to one section of the community", and asks for a joint initiative of the British and Irish Governments. Presumably he wants to make "conditional" the guarantee of Northern Ireland staying within the United Kingdom as long as the majority desires it. The willingness of the 98% of the inhabitants of the whole United Kingdom who are not Northern Ireland Protestants to continue to include within their borders the 2% who are would be "conditional" on the latter accepting the method of governing the province thought suitable by the former. This would presumably be power-sharing of the Sunningdale variety.

Required in this fashion to bear the entire political obloquy for withdrawing the most solemn pledges as well as running a major risk that Catholic "assurances" about Protestant conduct would be proved untrue, the British Government might make a counter-suggestion which would enable the Irish Republic to make a matching political sacrifice. Mr Paisley told the Commons on 29 November, as evidence of Northern goodwill to the South:

> "The Unionist leadership has never looked with anger and bitterness across the border and claimed back the three counties which many in the Community thought should be part of Northern Ireland."

Suppose the Irish and British Governments in a joint initiative proposed to end the partition of Ulster by restoring the counties of Cavan, Monaghan and Donegal to Northern Ireland. The size of the two communities of different religious origin and profession would be approximately equal, with a slight but probably not durable majority for the Protestants. In these circumstances it should be obvious to all engaged in politics that it would in practice be unfeasible to run the territory except on political lines that ran across sectarian divisions. In the longer run it would make more practicable the establishment of a joint commission that would, as John Hume put it, work out "a process designed to lead to an agreed Ireland with positive roles for all. . . ." In the short run, it would confront the IRA with an entirely new situation which might bring them to a halt.

This initiative would require no small political commitment by the Irish government; though the British Government would at the same time be required to renege on a very solemn engagement to the people of the North. If both the British and Irish governments carried credibility with the North, the likelihood is that, offered a choice between "artificial" power-sharing in 6 counties and "natural" methods of power-sharing in 9, the Northern Protestants would at long last become reconciled to the former.

THE LAUNCHING of this type of joint initiative would require a great deal of clearing of the ground between the two Governments, and imaginative political preparation on both sides. But it is hard to see how any small scheme which emerges from the party talks started by the Conservative government's Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Humphrey Atkins, can change the existing situation: it remains the untenable one of learning to live with "an acceptable level of violence." Somehow the British must convince all the inhabitants of Northern Ireland that they are of the firm and unalterable opinion that it is not in the national self-interest of Britain to incorporate any part of the island of Ireland; and that in consequence the full integration of the 6 counties into the Republic is out. If these larger initiatives are made impossible, as much by Irish reluctance as by British inability to innovate further, one way Britain could indicate her opposition to integration would be to agree with the Irish Government to set up a joint commission.

This could not undertake a short-run political initiative. It should take all the time it wishes, and in the end present a constitution for an "agreed Ireland", which (if Garret FitzGerald's recent Fine Gael discussion paper is anything to go by) will be for a Union with extremely modest powers indeed. This could then be put to a referendum in all 32 counties, requiring both a majority in the 26 county area and a majority in the 6 counties. The British Government, if it approved the scheme, should not be neutral in the campaign but make itself one of the advocates. Everything could be brought in to help (e.g. lavish American and EEC economic aid). Dr FitzGerald's sketchy idea of a possible non-political "Council of the British Isles" with various consequences of symbol and personal status (flag? currency? passports?) could be developed. Under

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present legislation, a poll on "the border question" can take place in the North once every ten years. If, despite all efforts, the proposed constitution was defeated the first time—as would seem likely—it could, with agreed modifications, be tried again the following decade.

The great argument against such innovative efforts is that they keep the awful issue stirred up. To which the answer must be that without them it will not lie down or go away.

Goronwy Rees

We mourn the death, on 12 December 1979, at the age of 70 of our incomparable colleague and friend, for 14 years (as "R") our editorial columnist

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Two Poems by Alan Brownjohn

Syllabics

At a deep pool left by a high tide high on a beach,
Rather sinisterly dark green even near its edge,
And rapidly shelving away to an unknown depth,
A various, bustling, organised family
Plays happily on through an overdue summer day
At the forming of little well-fashioned knolls of sand
And the scooping of narrow, regulated channels
With the help of improvised spades hacked out of driftwood,
So that quantities of water transferred in cartons
Might be pushed and manoeuvred from one point to the next.
You can never say ants are organised while one ant
Pisses off in quiet serendipity from the ranks,
Or that humans are individual while these nine
All dispose themselves in such unison, and delight
In the antics of brackish sea water and grains of sand
Gone black with the dull consensus of the polities
To crowd out our oceans with mercantile detritus
—And you can hardly say that a literary eye
Is not giving itself superfluous dilemmas
In pondering whether to organise such data
Into structures of formal sense, when the thing may prove
A sociological question, a case of how
An extended middle-class family runs itself
In nineteen-seventy-eight, as it cheerfully finds
A scheme of elaborate play on a tarnished beach,
The elders pushing their young to be entrepreneurs
And learn a tremendous work-ethic learning to coax
And wheedle the spillings of water to the right spot.
I suppose one might let it fade . . . a small cameo
Of a decorative kind, quiet plastic enjoyments
Going dimmer as the figures merge with the twilight,
And the calls die distantly in the nostalgic dusk
(The parents retiring, the children turning into
Young Eurocrats, or producing some kind of let-down,
And the future arriving with its ancient, heartless,
Recurring prospect of *déja vu* and *plus ça change*)
—Except that it glows in the mind with a feverish
And a wilful colour, on the memory's small screen:
The cavorting torsos crazy about their rituals,
The sun blazing uncontradictably, just this once,
On a long terrain of water and sand resplendent
With an unexpected heat-wave; an erratic case
Of forgiveable weather in a summer that gave
Not many days to build castles in the open air.

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The Leap

One Xmas in the High Street, the Rotary Tree
On the traffic island by the underground Gentlemen's
Concealed a plenteous amplifier, bawling
The sound of music as if from down below.

Rotarians were shaking boxes for children
Too far away, too heathen, or too poor
To have this kind of Xmas; and two lovers
Looked out upon this scene from where they sat

—On a cushion of white noise which they could not hear—
At the cotton-wool-snow-dotted window of
A little formica restaurant, threading hands
And picking at green salads between interlacements.

That deep hum of noise from the near deep freeze
Lulled all the sounds around them, held them fast
From the clamours of the Xmas street, kept off
This world altogether, more than they would have guessed.

All they could know was a happy avenue
Stretching away in front of them, and on
Into uplands of opportunity; and they thought:
Of all the times, this time we have it right!

—When suddenly a sneaky thermostat
Cut the droning freezer out to the starkest stop;
And with a squirming chill down every back,
The whole room took a leap into a ghastly

Stillness, and vividness. Their hands disjoined,
And to their eyes came nervous, separate smiles,
Much less certain than before: that wicked cold
Went through their empty fingers to their hearts,

And froze out words. So when the shaken room
Relaxed, and as the seething copper urn
Spilled out once more its rasping twists of coffee
Into trays of passive cups, they had this instinct

Of a string having somehow snapped in the distant air
—Until the traffic moved, and the tree again
Stood and ritually glistened, and everyone
Went deaf as usual with the chime of coin.

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NOTES & TOPICS

European Diary

The Line of Non-Alignment

Zurich

BY NOW IT SEEMS almost to be a law governing political particles—pieces breaking off and away from larger blocs are not in themselves capable of forming a bloc. The recent breakaway examples of Iran and Nicaragua, suddenly no longer attached to the Western system of alliances, illuminate the properties of so-called Non-Alignment. Once free of East and West they appear to be perforce independent of even that third bloc which for decades now has been trying to align itself along the lines of non-alignment. Contradictions will out; and first Tito and currently Castro have been trying vainly to hold together nations and peoples which are unwilling, or incapable of toeing a line. There are some who ascribe the difficulties even to "racial" factors, as Third World solidarities crumble in the attempts of "white" leaders of classic Left Revolutions to assume ideological leadership; for, after all, what did the "spirit of Bandung" in 1955 signify if not a decisively new colour consciousness?

Still, if some differences are proving intractable, other factors make for such harmonious cooperation as there is. In a world of warring ideologies—China *v.* Russia, Viet Nam *v.* Cambodia—some new comradely alignments are bound to take place, as impassioned rivals seek advantage, territory, prestige, allies. The grotesque result may be that within the Block-Free Alliance new blocs of antagonistic allies are being formed.

Tito dominated the first summit conference of the Non-Aligned in Belgrade 1961 as Castro did in Havana in 1979. For Tito it was then not only a matter of finding friends who would support an endangered Yugoslav sovereignty, but also an ambitious attempt to take over the leadership of revolutionary-communist forces and to play, far beyond the Balkan borders, a role in world politics. Castro is now playing the same role in Caribbean repertory. (Poor Che Guevara lost himself in unimportant backwater provinces; Fidel Castro is finding his true self on the world's stages.) One feels sure that the flamboyant *Lider Maximo* does not conceive of himself as a mere satrap of the great Soviet chairman in the Kremlin, but rather as a commander of powerful and effective Expeditionary Forces (now in West Africa, now in East Africa, tomorrow anywhere) who has become a necessary and indispensable ally of an expansionist empire.

IT IS NOT NEW in diplomatic history, these efforts of little nations with very narrow power bases to play a large role on the broader scene. Many have been tempted; a few have tried; and no world situation is more propitious than the current one in which the balance between great blocs of alliances issues in curious zones of "weightlessness", in which small and light particles appear to move freely and to have special impact. In any case the little nations are courted by the big powers and can, therefore, take themselves most seriously. Even the Maos and the Tengs get around to saying, "We are not a great power", as one bloc to the discomfort of the other picks up the big "China card" placed discreetly on the card-table by the "little" Chinese.

With Tito's difficulties in Havana, has even the non-leadership of the non-aligned passed from the European theatre? It could be only that the 87-year-old Marshal is too old and slow to command swift-moving allegiances, or that the "Yugoslav model" is no longer the attractive alternative for developing Third World nations. Marxism, at any rate, is no longer enough to provide a framework of secure sovereignty. The Czechoslovaks lost their sovereignty because of their "liberal" rule, the Cambodians because of their despotism. What will be the formula when the old heartland of non-alignment should be forced to get back into line? Some new phrase will be found, some pernicious formula for "change" and "progress", some ingenious rationalisation to "move the Revolution forward." Small wonder that Titoism is so word-shy these days, suspicious of any slogan that seems to impugn the integrity of neutrality and sovereignty.[1]

[1] As the Havana correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* reported (10 September 1979) on the semantic conflicts within the "Non-Aligned" Conference:

> "In an organisation where one word in a paragraph can send a country into transports of delight or an apoplectic rage, depending on the word, the Yugoslavs did get the preamble to condemn 'hegemony' along with imperialism, racism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and Zionism. In Belgrade 'hegemony' has one meaning—Soviet domination."

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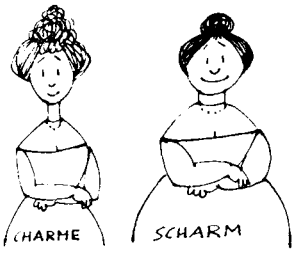
The old adventurousness has given way to conservatism. One needs allies who respect the true meaning of national independence and not the dangerous rhetoric of violent overturnings. A lonely Tito may find himself standing alone, as an ever combative Fidel Castro goes on battling bravely alongside Big Brother, knocking the bloc off anybody in their way. A terrible choice stands before the new nations of the Third World—to get lost in the mêlée of rival blocs or to lose themselves in the new giganticism of their very own third bloc whose Orwellian credo now reads: non-alignment means following the line.

François Bondy

On Two Sides of the Rhine

Bonn



THE OCCASION was a special television programme out of the once-ruined now-restored Berlin *Reichstag*, and the question was put to *Bundeskanzler* Helmut Schmidt. It came from Alain Clément, *Le Monde*'s thoughtful and most experienced student of German affairs, and it sounded if it was in a spirit of Gallic self-questioning. "Why is it, I ask myself, that things are not going as well for France as for the Federal Republic of Germany? . . ." But in explaining the question, as is now the fashion among "talking heads" on our screens, he proceeded to give his own answer. "In radical defeat radical consequences are drawn. But when a defeat is camouflaged as a half- or quarter-victory, then it takes decades longer to recover. . . ."

Chancellor Schmidt, up to his quick-lipped reputation, saw the opportunity to play his role again as a generous European statesman and tried to defend the case for France for his hard-pressed Paris opposite number, Raymond Barre, who all in all was in firm control of the economic and financial situation, and he saw not crisis but promise in the air. It was a touching moment of Franco-German solidarity.

But, looking at the results of the recent *L'Express* opinion surveys, I wonder if anything would help. Neither his energies nor his rather *gemuetliche* appearance have prevented Raymond Barre from sinking, with almost Jimmy Carter-like precipitousness, to the bottom of the popularity lists: he emerges as the most unpopular Premier in the 21 years of the Fifth Republic. And the detailed statistics must be inducing as much depression in the Matignon as the similar figures are in the White House.

Some 80% believe that the present French difficulties are "more serious" than all the previous ones and they see "no end" to the crisis. The Premier could draw some consolation from the fact that a Government of the Left would "not be better" (27%), would be in "the same" amount of trouble (39%), or would even be "worse" (19%). The man who had promised "a turning point within three years" was pronounced a failure by a 62% majority, especially on the issues of rising prices (82%) and unemployment (81%). In a similar survey conducted by the Left-wing *Nouvel Observateur*, some 63% felt that the government was at a total impasse. Even Raymond Aron, who for all his dour scepticism often gives the brilliant impression that there are somewhere clear solutions, has been disseminating pessimism. He feels that the American recession (if not the English one, alone) is in danger of spreading itself over the whole world-economy, and he almost seemed to be wringing his hands when he asked: "Is France in any better position (better, that is, than in the crisis of 1974) to weather the onsetting storm? . . ."

SO I WONDER WHETHER the soothing German words from the other side of the Rhine are considered to be just the right tone. Few compliments come these days from the crackling talk of the *Bundeskanzler*—no "nice and easy chap" in London, or Washington, or Jerusalem—but apparently he is persuaded that one has been underestimating the soundness and the extent of French prosperity. Yet of what help is the German Chancellor's admiration when Frenchmen today, after thirty years of European boom times, still talk of the "*deutsche Wunder*", the famed German miracle, with a mixture of shock and envy! As for the German attitudes, I do not think it can be doubted that we are quite sincere when we go on proclaiming our hope that France will flower and bloom. This may be ascribable to post-War Germany's well-known pro-European passions, and all the good-neighbourly pieties that go with them. More than that, the good will is followed up by much curiosity and steady attention. Paris is crowded with German journalists and permanently accredited bureau chiefs. In Bonn there are only a handful, and I was surprised the other day when a newly-arrived French correspondent told me that he had been given his choice to move either to the USA or to the *Bundesrepublik*, and he decided: "Bonn is more important for us than Washington. . . ."

That sense of new, or growing, importance is surely reflected in the recent speculation about

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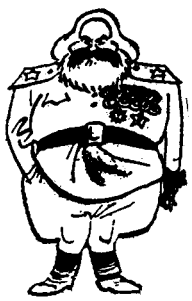
adventurous French-German cooperation—namely, the possibility of joint responsibility for the costly programmes of atomic armament, a bi-national "*Force de frappe*." This, be it noted, came from solid Gaullist circles, and not from the "New Right" searching sentimentally among the old-fashioned scrapbooks of "the brotherhood of Frenchmen and Germans." Some appeals for "solidarity" only awake dark spirits from a deep from which Western Europe has long escaped. We may, as I have been suggesting, be talking past each other these days; but one thing is certain, that 40 years after the outbreak of World War II, there is simply nobody on either side of the Rhine who can conceive of Frenchmen and Germans shooting at each other again. Peace is here to stay, whether we can win the battle of prices and prosperity or not.

Werner Höfer

The Case of Robert Havemann

By Günter Maschke



THE MEASURES taken by the East German Communist leadership of the *DDR* against its critics, and the recent convictions of Stefan Heym and Robert Havemann for "currency offences", suggest that thought is most dangerous when it is theoretical. The insistence of "the true and authentic socialism" that all intellectuals should be in complete and wholesome agreement gives them the choice only of becoming abject apologists or uncompromising dissidents. There is no middle way, no third camp . . . but such hopes spring eternal, since they promise both that the spirit will become flesh and that the spirit will become free.

That a third way may just be possible is the useful unmilitant illusion of Robert Havemann which enabled him to preserve his integrity and finally to gain a famous victory over the Party régime on 8 May. For the first time in 18 months the 70-year-old scientist and author, weak and frail from his various ailments, was able to move freely again. Whole companies of *Volkspolizei* who had rotated taking up guard positions outside his front and rear doors will have to re-cycle their vigilance. For the moment he can come and go as he pleases, and those aware of the mania of Communist governments for marking historical dates must have noted the event with raised eyebrows. The Party thought it could afford to be magnanimous on the anniversary of "the glorious victory of the anti-Hitler coalition." But 8 May 1945 was above all the day on which the Nazi hold on the last inmates of prisons and camps ended. Uncertainty in the use of political symbols is evidence of a certain political insecurity.

Havemann's victory is not diminished by the fact that formal proceedings are now being taken against him, and various other members of the dissident opposition are again being put under pressure. His survival is not to be explained only by Prime Minister Honecker's sentimentality (they were fellow-prisoners under the Nazis in Brandenburg), nor by the world-wide protests of Western (and some Eastern) writers and intellectuals, nor by the Italian Party's expression of Euro-Communist concern. He who persists in his solitary struggle may finally find allies rallying to his side. It was the quiet unswerving fanaticism of a moralist prepared to suffer for his heretical beliefs that forced a totalitarian state party to retreat. Whatever may happen now, it seems unthinkable that he will again be put under house-arrest or crudely deported, like so many of his friends, across the Wall to the West.

YET Professor Havemann's political record is neither very remarkable nor distinguished, for he was neither an anti-Stalinist in the past nor over the long years of his intellectual life a very subtle or independent Marxist spirit. He was unperturbed when the Moscow "Show Trials" began in 1936: as he wrote, "Zinoviev, Kamenev, and all those comrades had at the time almost no political significance for me. I had hardly heard their names. . . ." But Zinoviev was the real founder of the German Communist Party (of which Havemann then was an underground member) and he had been the leader of the Communist Inter-

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national for some eight years—hardly a mere "name." Either Havemann was unusually ignorant or mindlessly loyal to Stalin (in whose name, after all, more Communists were murdered than in the name of Adolf Hitler).

In 1951 Dr Havemann was a deputy of the *Volkskammer*, and wrote the following in the *SED* theoretical organ of the *Einheit*, about a book by the Austrian Communist, Walther Hollitscher:

> ". . . The whole weakness and falseness of Comrade Hollitscher's position appears in the claim that Sartre is 'at best a confused rebel.' What he should have done [in his book, *Wissenschaftlich betrachtet*] is to reveal the class interests being served by Existentialism and to unmask the whole reactionary class role of that quack-philosophy. . . ."

Elsewhere he wrote,

> ". . . These are the characteristic ideological weaknesses with which many comrades still have to struggle—lack of Party loyalty, lack of irreconcilability towards reactionary ideologies, a tendency to objectivism, and an inclination to mechanistic ways of thinking. . . . The whole evil of compromise is here."

Finally, we were also told by Professor Havemann in those days that "psychoanalysis is an anti-humane, barbaric ideology, for it bases human psychology on animal instincts and denies the human mastery of the bestial. . . . Its reactionary, unscientific and mystical nature has been demonstrated in the Soviet Union." (Suppose for a moment that Hollitscher had then been living, not in petty-bourgeois class-ridden Austria, but in the conditions of true East German socialism—would mere "house-arrest" have been sufficient punishment for his heinous intellectual errors?)

Some five years after the East Berlin revolt of 17 June 1953, Havemann was still writing in classical Stalinist style to his friend Heinz Brandt, who had fled from the *DDR*: "In your place I should rather have gone to prison in the *DDR* than take refuge in the [West German] state of clerical-fascist restoration. . . ."

It was in the year 1964, after a number of open arguments, that he was expelled from the Party. He had taken a somewhat undogmatic position on Marxian dialectics in a book of lectures entitled *Dialectik ohne Dogma*?; and he thought he had, as an honoured professor of physical chemistry at the Humboldt University, a shade more intellectual freedom than proved to be the case.

TO BE SURE, one does not have to be a sociologist or a philosopher to make a trenchant analysis

JANUARY 1980 ANNUAL

The Byron Journal

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£3·00 per copy (plus postage).

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Published in association with The Byron Society.
Latest Issue January 22nd, 1980

Published by:
The Byron Society Journal Limited
Byron House, 6 Gertrude Street
London SW10 01-352 5112

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of one's own environment; but this is not what we have come to expect from Robert Havemann. What he has been offering his countrymen, and the Marxian movement beyond the frontiers, is a set of standard arguments on the subject of Socialism and Capitalism; and their tireless repetition doesn't make them any more original or satisfactory. His devotion to the hackneyed may be heroic, but he also continues undismayed to be carried away by wishful thinking with an almost childish enthusiasm. He believes that the East German social order is "ultimately" (*letztlich*) the better of the two German states—since it has abolished the private ownership of the means of production. For about 20 years now it has been his fond hope that its sound and solid socialist substance will provide a base for humanisation and liberalisation; and then of course it would be in a position to compete with the West, for "we want ideological co-existence, intellectual competition, argument with what others are thinking" (1964).

Shouldn't it at least have been surprising that so little progress towards humane and liberal ideals has been made over the decades in the *DDR* and elsewhere in the Eastern bloc? As Havemann claimed, "the transition to democratic socialism in a modern highly industrialised state [means] simply the adaptation of the superstructure to changes that have already taken place in the foundation." He should, then, have at least tried to analyse the nature of the obstacles in the path. Marxist theory itself, since the days of Otto Rühle and Karl Korsch, has made some contributions to this problem, which inevitably raises the question: Doesn't that very central control of production affect the life of the masses more fatefully than any system of private ownership? And isn't the whole issue of "ownership" exaggerated? What exactly is this "bureaucracy"—a new ruling class, a useless social stratum, a parasitic clique? Is it, or is it not, "exploitation" (in the Marxist sense) when a group or stratum or new class, all non-owners, determines what should be done with the surplus product? As for the primary Eastern economic ambition—"catching up with the West"—how much of it is due to the fact that powerful Capitalist rivals do exist and flourish, and how much is owed to the special interests of the Communist rulers whose power (and privileges) are connected with their decisions to limit available goods for the people and to give bureaucratic primacy to grandiose investment programmes? Finally, there is the problem of socialism's very own "military-industrial complex"; and Havemann here deplores its existence but offers no thoughtful explanation of its proliferation.

I WOULD VENTURE to say that there is no aspect of "Socialist reality" that hasn't years and even decades ago been more incisively examined by

"I am no Russian Ayatollah"...

HAVING used "Ayatollah" several times in my recent report from Moscow, I hope I was not the coiner of the phrase which has aroused Solzhenitsyn's ire. In my own case it was in no sense a political epithet. It was only meant to suggest parallels to that extraordinary historical phenomenon by which a powerful believer in exile (Khomeini in Paris) was able to reach out to millions in the far-away homeland. It is a form of spiritual influence which, in the case of Solzhenitsyn forcibly separated from his own homeland, is devoutly to be wished. An admirer, if not always a follower, of Solzhenitsyn's grand struggle for Russian liberties, I would be the last who would want to link him with the violent fanaticism (and worse) which has established itself after the Moslem Ayatollah's return to his own faithful. The point Solzhenitsyn makes in this communication is indeed worth pondering: Why cannot the revival of religious values in Russia play the same "progressive" role as in Catholic Poland and in the Israeli democracy? But this question raises still other questions. If such powerfully renewed beliefs were to reinforce, rather than hamper, the emergence of a more liberal Russian spirit, isn't it necessary to "master the past", i.e. to overcome the historical traditions of those Muscovite mergers in which the church was the servant of the Orthodox State and then the State was the servant of the Orthodox Party? Isn't "the separation of powers" still on the agenda of the day?

M.J.L.

Vermont

WITHIN the latest wave of emigration from the Soviet Union a new group is forming—out of hostility, fear, antagonism towards religion in general, or only towards Russian Orthodoxy—and, more than anything else, afraid of the possibility that in a future Russia the forces of Orthodox religion will assume an important and spiritually significant place. A number of Western journalists have taken much the same approach in major periodicals.

You would have thought they would see the example of Poland before their eyes: where the Church, despite pressure from an atheistic dictatorship, has exercised a beneficent rule over the spiritual life of the nation. Or perhaps the example of Israel, where religious feeling has an influential place among the citizens, and indeed in the functioning of the state. Somehow these examples are conveniently avoided, and Russia alone is denied what is conceded to other nations.

FOR ONE REASON OR ANOTHER, *certain observers—frightened by the possibility of a Russian religious*

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Marxist (and non-Marxist) authors than in the recent works of Professor Havemann. He wants something called a "New Socialism", but he wastes no thought over the class or social force that might be the carrier of this change, i.e. what elements in the *DDR* might be relied upon to fight for this "*ganz anderen* (quite different)" kind of socialism, a "genuine" socialism which (as opposed to the official "real" socialism around him) has yet to come into being. In his recent book on the subject of such an "Alternative", the imprisoned Rudolf Bahro has at least confronted these aspects of the problem of power, and this obviously made him potentially more dangerous (he was recently released and expelled to West Germany).

IN AN INTERVIEW a few years ago (with *Stern*, in 1975) Havemann was asked a question about his criteria for a true or genuine socialist society, and he replied:

> ". . . freedom of speech, freedom of information, freedom to choose one's work and place of residence, freedom of movement, and the possibility to leave the country. . . ."

Although he quickly added that "more" was required, it was quite clear that the "worse" half of Germany, the West German Bonn Republic, was already in full enjoyment of at least three-quarters of true socialism, while his "better" half still had a long way to go. And it still might also take a rather long time, since as Havemann believes only by means of the Party and the support of the Soviet Union can the world be changed. Nor does he get around to explaining how exactly that party would escape from the dark night of post-Stalinism (with new leaders? with a new political constitution?). Small wonder that his best hopes really lie in an early collapse of the West—the latest *Abracadabra* of Marxism, always on the look-out for the magic keyword to denote the last turning-point and final catastrophe, is "the Crisis of Growth (*Wachstumskrise*)." All in all, since those early pre-socialist ideals of the Enlightenment and liberal Democracy are held to be the real and still-to-be-achieved values of a good society that lies before us, it is quite obvious that the worst kind of socialism is better than the best kind of capitalism!

To be sure, "the rule of Law" is a precious thing, and Havemann bemoans its absence in the *DDR*, having suffered under the spurious "legality" of the East German police's invasion of his home and privacy. But the rule of law is based on binding contracts and enforceable agreements, guaranteed if need be by a third party, a constitutional force, which protects diverging interests. And it is just this variety and divergence which are precluded by the monolithic and teleological motives of Communist aspiration. Property, of whatever kind it may be,

. . . *Of Piety & Impiety*

renaissance (which, even in the face of deadly pressure from Communism, is indeed taking place)—hasten, in their distant havens abroad, to defame this renaissance to Western readers. They shamelessly attempt to connect Russian Orthodoxy with anti-Semitism: in fact they identify the two. And recently a very shabby trick has been used in this campaign—"the Persian trick" I call it—in which the horrors of Moslem fanaticism in Iran are somehow connected with the revival of Orthodox religion in Russia, as if to throw Persian sand into the eyes of those who elsewhere have the courage to kneel.

It is a politically effective trick, used by irresponsible people with little concern for the depth, the fruitfulness, the solidity of future spiritual relationships between Europe and a free Russia. But it is precisely those who have been victims of Communist fanaticism who are immune to any fanatical virus.

IN THE PROGRAMMES **or the declarations of the spokesmen for Russian religion or culture there is not the faintest parallel with the structure of contemporary theocratic thought and power in Iran. (The author of "The Gulag Archipelago", in particular, has been presented with a "friendly" charge that not even Soviet propaganda managed to concoct: he wants new Gulags, new Ayatollahs!) Among the most insistent, the loudest, the most intolerant in this new school has been Professor Efim Etkind in Paris, who writes in the French and European press.**

Some, of undoubted intellect and sharp political sensibility, nevertheless have developed no spiritual perception—especially in respect of religion. It is as if one of the body's organs was lacking. Precisely this deficiency can be seen in Professor Etkind when he attempts to equate Russian Orthodoxy with . . . Leninist ideology. He plays "the Persian trick" when he ascribes to me ideas and sentiments which I have never expressed and never published, and which bear no resemblance to those I truly hold. Such misrepresentations have been seized on by "Die Zeit" with hysterical eagerness.

THE DANGER IS THAT *this campaign against the religious rebirth of Russia may poison the mind of the Western reader—it can lead to suspicion and hostility against the very forces in my country which present an insoluble problem to the Soviet leadership, those forces which alone are capable of establishing secure and peaceful relations with their neighbours in a Europe free of oppression.*

There is yet another side to this campaign: the notion of some kind of reconciliation with Communism as "a lesser evil." But there could be only a short interval before the beast opened his jaws.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn

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is surely at least one of the mainsprings of law; and the question whether the freedom of the capitalist system (Lukács called it "the freedom to lock one's front door") may not be inseparably connected with capitalist-type economies is one that a Marxist ought at least to ask. Capitalism without democracy does exist in the modern world, but is there any democracy without capitalism?

What Havemann would like to see is an efficient economic system, one that can react more quickly on the level of genuinely realistic prices, a system as it were with cybernetic qualities which constitute a kind of technocratic infrastructure of a socialist democracy. At the same time, of course, he never tires of attacking the capitalist model of civilisation, with its rising standards, growing needs, and its wastefulness. More than that, how is his ideal system to grow and change and develop along these lines without "exploiting" the prosperity (and even the crises) of the Western world on which it remains dependent?

The effect of such dependence and cooperation is to shore up the very model of civilisation which Havemann regards with such suspicion and aversion, and indeed to underscore in the minds of the hard-pressed Eastern citizenry the necessary connection between freedom and welfare, between bourgeois liberties and material progress. This is especially so when East-West relations are so controlled and limited that the Eastern system, for all its opportunities, continues to be an inefficient resource-wasting contraption. As Havemann quite correctly puts it, "One wants so much to overtake and surpass capitalism—one wants so much to escape from capitalism—but one continues to be hopelessly at its mercy. . . ." It is a cruel dilemma for a critical spirit without a very precise analytical mind: to criticise Western *Zivilisationsmodelle* and to criticise Eastern torpor and stagnation—and not to be intellectually prepared to face the detailed debate about the human complexities and social difficulties of all change in an industrial (or post-industrial) society. Indeed the whole emotional dilemma of the European Left is manifest in the case of Havemann. On the one hand they dream of the day when, as Marx hoped, all of society's wealth would be distributed fairly and amply for one and all; on the other hand, they find the so-called super-abundancies of efficient and affluent societies "obscene."

Is a "concrete futurology", which Havemann calls for but doesn't ever outline, the answer? His simple dream is based on the shaky assumption that a state system of social security for one and all will somehow produce the splendid individuals of a new world. He desires, in order to accelerate "humanisation", that the Revolution offer "more"; he also desires, in order to foster liberal human rights, the abolition of all "ideological tutelage by the State." A régime cannot be overtaken both on the Left and the Right. One cannot at once demand more asceticism and more enjoyment of life, more revolutionary ethos and more liberal individuality, more canned goods and at the same time less canned goods. In any event, whatever direction the new and hopeful change takes, one cannot assume that the Soviet Union would never ever do a second Prague, or that the *SED* East German régime is so "*morsch*" (rotten) that it will soon disintegrate. If it did collapse, either the Red Army tanks would be rolling through the streets of Leipzig, Magdeburg, and East Berlin, or Secretary Brezhnev would have to announce the USSR's renunciation of its role as a world power.

BUT LET ME also say this: the naivety, the blind spots, the contradictions in Havemann's thoughts and ideas are one thing. Another is that here is a man who is showing great personal courage, and in his way is offering to a Marxist-Leninist system an intellectual challenge which is proving to be far more effective than the fastidious academic exercises we have been getting. Reluctantly perhaps, and with a certain sly pleasure, he has familiarised a whole nation with his ordeal and the nation has recognised itself in him. His arguments are as commonplace as they are to the point. People should not be persecuted; everybody is entitled to express opinions freely; some have "too much" and others have "too little"; one ought to be allowed to leave one's country if one wants to, and to return to it or to remain in it even if everything is not to one's liking; there should be an end to harassment, torture, slander.

Beyond, then, all the confusion and ambiguity there keeps shining through a remarkable decency, ingenuous and sometimes even provincial; but it is a special quality which, in all the long years of his house-arrest in half-Germany's half-capital, he has been living and expressing as if it were indeed the elementary basis of all civilised communities. His tenacious insistence on obvious and well-known principles, his unflagging naivety, is proving to be more than a match for the cynicism of illegitimate power-holders. The moralising may often be intellectually barely tolerable, but it has a certain man-in-the-street matter-of-factness that prevents public life from descending completely to the level of hooliganism; it even prevents that "impossible dream" of unattainable fraternity from remaining a completely idle fiction. To cling to the simple moral principle "one does not do that sort of thing (*Man tut so etwas nicht!*)" is to diminish the cowardice, coldness and pain in the world; and, surrounded as we are by History and Sociology and Theory, perhaps what we lack nowadays is the simple moral reflex that somehow in Robert Havemann has remained so intact.

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UNDER WESTERN EYES

Of Myths & Horrors

By Leopold Labedz

"Go, go, go, said the bird: human kind cannot bear very much reality."
T. S. ELIOT, **Four Quartets**

"Illusions, dead, continue to rot within us."
DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH, **Memoirs (1979)**

AS A SEMANTIC LEGACY of Hitler's and Stalin's practices, our vocabulary has been enriched by "*Genocide*" and "*Gulag*." Unfortunately, even though the two dictators are long since dead, these terms are not just of historical interest.

Originally, "genocide"—a concept formulated by Rafael Lemkin in connection with the Holocaust—was defined as the deliberate destruction of an ethnic group. But it has come to mean the wholesale extermination of any category of people by a political authority controlling them; thus it applies not only to the annihilation of Jews by Nazis, but also to the victims of the Pol Pot régime in Cambodia.

"Gulag" is a term which did not originate as a concept. It was an acronym of the Main Administration of the Camps (*Glavnoe Upravlenye Lagerey*) in Stalin's Russia. But when Solzhenitsyn gave it general currency in the West, it came to be applied to other cases of what David Rousset had defined as *l'univers concentrationnaire*. In France, a recent book about the Vietnamese "re-education camps" is called *Le Goulag Vietnamien*; and Charles Sternberg (the executive director of the International Rescue Committee) has called them a contemporary version of the Gulag Archipelago.

The two terms evoke, more vividly than anything else in the language, the specific form of man's inhumanity to man in our time: the gas ovens of Auschwitz and Treblinka, the white hell of Vorkuta and Kolyma, the macabre mass "evacuation" of the capital city of Phnom Penh and the subsequent *Khmer Rouge* bestialities. What was involved in all these 20th-century horrors was not only torture, starvation, and violent death inflicted upon defenceless people, but also the fact that they were committed not as acts of war, but as civil actions in which the question of personal or individual guilt had not even arisen. For the individual it is not a matter of "having done something", but simply of being something (or being so accused). For him there is no way out; no alternative behaviour can help him avoid his fate. At the time of the Inquisition, Jews could at least convert to becoming *Marranos*. Under Hitler they were unconditionally condemned to perdition on racial grounds. Under Stalin "enemies of the people" were extirpated according to such general categories as "kulaks", "Trotskyist wreckers", or "rootless cosmopolitans." Under Pol Pot, people ("the intellectuals") were killed simply for being literate (often "proved" by their wearing spectacles).

One day, perhaps, we will have a comparative study of genocide, and the story would be incomplete without a picture of the international reactions in the outside world to these atrocities. It is striking what great, evidently deep-seated, reluctance there was in each historical case of genocide to accept the hard facts and recognise them for what they were.[1] Universal condemnation was delayed on each occasion by a tendency to ignore, obfuscate, or rationalise the facts. Were those who denied them anything but moral accomplices?

WILFUL BLINDNESS is not so visible today, but we are dismally confronted by many forms of moral insensitivity about the problem at present. For one thing, the term "genocide" is increasingly used as a trivial metaphor. For instance, at the recent Labour Party Conference, Neil Kinnock MP referred to the Government's school policy as "Tory educational genocide", while another delegate, objecting to rising unemployment, spoke of "industrial genocide in the North." (The Communist *Morning Star* of 5 October 1979 published a photograph of a shipyard worker carrying a placard with the words "*Industrial genicide* [sic] *on Tayside*".) But the Labour Party's Conference resolution on Cambodia actually managed to avoid mentioning the horrors in "liberated" Indo-China. . . .

Denying the Undeniable

THERE SEEMS TO BE a virtual consensus on the subject of "Genocide"—yet although everybody duly abhors it, how often this is accompanied by ambiguities and inconsistencies! The skeletons in the mega-closets are so

[1] The most striking case is that of Jews themselves, cf. Walter Laqueur, "Jewish Denial and The Holocaust", *Commentary* (December 1979).

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ideologically embarrassing that it is frequently difficult to distinguish between the process of selective amnesia and an onset of new myth-making, between cranks and non-cranks, even between Left and Right.

The former US Attorney-General, Ramsey Clark, a leading American "progressive", has called Israeli actions in South Lebanon—"genocidal." James Baldwin declared in *The Nation* (29 September 1979), after the dismissal of Ambassador Andrew Young, that he had "attempted to ward off a holocaust" and he added quickly, lest he be suspected of harbouring ethical or humanitarian sentiments, that "the state of Israel was not created for the salvation of the Jews: it was created for the salvation of the western interests. . . ."

The Rev. Jesse Jackson, the American Black activist who went to the Middle East on a "peace mission", has declared that he is "sick and tired of hearing about the Holocaust. . . ." After visiting Israel's Yad Vashem memorial he said that "in all, the Nazis had killed more non-Jews than Jews"—and, after all, "60 million blacks had been exterminated during the slavery era" (*Newsweek*, 8 October). The point of this preposterously inaccurate comparison is presumably to indicate that Blacks suffered more than Jews. *Roots—si, Holocaust—no.* But why should even those who learn their history from the TV soap-operas want to weigh up the beastliness of chattel slavery against the gas-chamber horrors of genocide?

Like the Rev. Jesse Jackson, Vanessa Redgrave also embraced the PLO's Yasir Arafat. When she received her "Oscar" award for fighting the Nazis in the Hollywood film on and by Lillian Hellman, the local American Nazis demonstrated to support her against the protesting Jews. Unlike Mr. Jackson, she obviously is not "sick and tired of hearing about the Holocaust": in her next film she is playing the role of Fania Fénelon who happened to survive Auschwitz because she was a violinist in the camp orchestra.

Quelle finesse de sentiments! And what an admirable combination—a Trotskyite and a Christian; Vanessa and Jesse; *Rouge et Noir*; white cant and black hypocrisy (or vice versa); Nazi genocide and soul-food for thought. But not a murmur yet about the (red) graves in Cambodia.

ANXIETIES have recently been expressed that the German wave of interest in Adolf Hitler, manifested a generation after his downfall, may possibly reflect a desire to vindicate some of his policies, even though the neo-Nazis have remained a tiny and insignificant group. The phenomenal interest in the TV showing of *Holocaust* (seen by over 53 million German viewers) has put paid to such speculations. Whatever its artistic demerits, the series made it more difficult to cast doubts on the Nazi atrocities.

Who could now dismiss Hitler's genocide of the Jews as "a Zionist myth"? This, after all, was a permanent theme of neo-Nazi propaganda in its attempt to exploit the universal reluctance to believe the horrors and, indeed, the specifically German reluctance to face the *Schuldfrage*. It is ironical that so many of the specious efforts to whitewash Hitler, contributing to the perpetuation of the *unbewältigte Vergangenheit*, the Germans' "unmastered past", have come from outside Germany.

In Britain the pseudonymous Richard Harwood published a pamphlet, *Did Six Million Really Die?*, an attempt to "revise" the established image of the Nazi murders by declaring them to be *Greuelpropaganda* spread by Jews and Communists. According to Gitta Sereny (in the *New Statesman* of 2 November 1979), the real name of the author is Richard Verrall, the editor of the National Front monthly, *Spearhead*. The pamphlet has now been translated into German and French, reprinted in Great Britain, and serialised in the USA by a Louisiana monthly, *Christian Vanguard*.

Another contribution to the myth-making about Hitler, also coming to Germany from abroad, is the book by David Irving, *Hitler's War*. Irving, who exculpates Hitler from complicity in "the Final Solution", has been soundly thrashed by the leading British specialists on the subject, such as Alan Bullock and Hugh Trevor-Roper; and his book has been dismissed by serious journals such as *The Economist* as "a masterpiece of disinformation." But it has undoubtedly helped spread confusion and has provided the German neo-Nazis with welcome succour.

In the USA the associate professor of electrical engineering at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, Arthur R. Butz, has written a pseudo-scientific book (with 444 footnotes!), *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, in which it is claimed, yet again, that the Holocaust was a "Zionist" and "Marxist" propaganda invention. It has been published in German translation as *Der Jahrhundert-Betrug* and has evidently also influenced a number of cranks in Britain, France, and Australia. In a letter to the *New Statesman* (4 August), the author "strongly objects" to the characterisation of his book as "neo-Nazi"; but it was put out by the same publisher as Harwood's pamphlet and has been used by the neo-Nazis here and elsewhere to "demonstrate" that the Holocaust is "a fairy tale." The neo-Nazi weekly *Deutsche National-Zeitung* published excerpts from it, with a red banner headline above the masthead: "WER ERFAND DEN SCHWINDEL VON 6 MILLIONEN VERGASTEN JUDEN? (Who invented the hoax of 6 million gassed Jews?)"

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Another academic crank in America, a former professor of economics, Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., provides a spectacular example of effortless transition from New Left to New Right, if such labels still retain any significance.

As in other manifestations of the Commu-Nazi syndrome, anti-Semitism today plays a prominent role. LaRouche is the chairman of the so-called "U.S. Labour Party" and its candidate for President in the 1980 elections. He has been politically active since 1966, but first appeared as a leader of the Marxist National Caucus of Labour Committees during the 1968 Columbia University "student revolution." In 1972, after a visit to Germany, LaRouche turned his party on a new path, preaching an economic policy based on a "corrected" Marxist "theory of value", a "humanist outlook"—and anti-Semitism. He does not whitewash Hitler, but considers that the monetarist economic policy *à la* Milton Friedman must also lead to "slave labour and death camps." He declares that "the current monetary and economic policies of the Carter Administration are fascist", and that "the Zionist lobby in the USA is a fascist political formation." As a *New York Times* editorial (10 October) noted, he warned "a thousand well-organized followers that he is a target for assassination by conspiracies involving the Rockefeller family, the Carter Administration, the Israeli secret police and even the Queen of England. . . ."

IS ANYONE STILL under the impression that Cartesian *clarté* must be less blind than Anglo-Saxon empiricism? In France, two academic figures have tried assiduously to deny the existence of the Holocaust. One of them, the late Paul Rassinier (from the *Académie de Besançon*), was himself imprisoned in Buchenwald. He wrote some four books (*Le Mensonge d'Ulysse*; *Ulysse Trahi par les Siens*; *Le Véritable Procès Eichmann*; *Le Drame des Juifs Européens*—all also published in Germany) in which he vehemently attacked "the legend of Nazi diabolism." Another French academic who rejected "the myth of the Nazi gas-chambers" is the associate professor of literature at the University of Lyon, Robert Faurisson. In his lectures and communications (*Le Monde*, 16 and 29 December 1978) he referred to 20 books (among them the aforementioned) which established this "fact." His allegations were immediately refuted by a number of surviving eye-witnesses and qualified historians; but who can tell how many gullible innocents may drink from this well?

The lies of the myth-makers confuse the ignorant and poison the memory of humanity. And when the contemporary witnesses are dead, who knows what effect such obnoxious and cranky falsifications may have in undermining the historical truth about the genocidal abominations? With the passage of time the traumatic impact of such crimes and their memories fades, and myths will increasingly encroach on authentic history.

In Australia, the Melbourne lawyer John Bennett (the secretary of the liberal Victorian Council for Civil Liberties) created a sensation by publishing a letter in the Melbourne *Age* (22 January 1979) and in the *News-Weekly* (31 January 1979) which repeated the assertions of A. R. Butz. His letter has been followed by yet another media "debate" in which the deranged ravings of a mythomaniac manage to achieve the status of "controversial" opinions.

The "controversy" in the respectable organs of the Australian press raged more intensely than the one with Harwood in the London *Daily Telegraph* and with Faurisson in the Paris *Le Monde*. It flourished in the *National Times* and *The Age* in January–April, and again in June–July 1979 in the Australian *Nation Review*. Bennett declared that he "had been conned for 30 years by the Holocaust propaganda" and said that "the idea of Holocaust is a spill-over from wartime propaganda." His odd mentality produced a peculiar "progressive-reactionary" symbiosis whitewashing all genocidal régimes:

> "The Holocaust legend is extensively used for propaganda reasons to support the diplomatic position of Israel. The legend is no more reliable than the atrocity stories about genocide in Kampuchea and Uganda, or the 20 million killed by Stalin legend."

This kind of Right-Left symbiosis reminds one of the German "libertarian" terrorist Ulrike Meinhof, who did not deny the fact of the Holocaust, but argued during her trial (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 15 December 1972) that

> "Auschwitz meant that six million Jews were killed, and thrown on to the waste-heap of Europe, for what they were: money-Jews (*Geldjuden*). . . ."

Specific beliefs about the significance of genocide, or indeed about its extent, may differ; yet there is no mistaking the remarkable confluence of attitudes reflected in the ideological prejudices and political stereotypes of the mythomaniacs, on both the Right and the Left.

In matters of genocide also, *les extrèmes se touchent.*

Holocaust & Gulag

IN THE SOVIET UNION there is constant harping on the theme of "neo-Nazism", but not on the theme of the Holocaust. Soviet propaganda has always tried to obscure the fact that Jews were a

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special target of Hitler's "Final Solution." That Hitler singled out European Jewry for "special treatment" is glossed over. When, after resisting for decades the proposal to erect a local memorial to the massacred victims of Babi Yar, the Soviet government finally built one there, there was simply no reference at all to the slaughter of Jews! Until recently, the term "genocide" was scarcely used in Soviet publications; but it suddenly was very current when it became necessary to justify the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia.

Occasional references to the Jewish tragedy may appear when they are used to lend credibility to the alarm over "the neo-Nazi menace." It was quite exceptional when *Literaturnaya Gazeta* (20 September 1978), reporting on the Richard Harwood pamphlet, wrote that "he tries to deny the fact, known to the whole world, of the extermination of millions of Jews in the Nazi concentration camps." It seemed almost a slip of censorship control, for such statements are practically never encountered in Soviet publications. They would run counter to the open and official anti-Semitic campaign which is being increasingly conducted in the Soviet Union. The campaign is based on the familiar stereotypes recalling Streicher's *Der Stuermer* and the infamous *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. A recent book, *International Zionism: History and Politics* (published in 1977 under the auspices of no less an institution than the Soviet Academy of Sciences), asserts that "the Jewish bourgeoisie", using such firms as Lazard Frères, Lehman Brothers, Kuhn Loeb, Loeb Rhoades, Bache & Co., and Goldman Sachs, pursues its ancient goal of world domination by seeking "the expansion of their positions in the economy of the largest capitalist states . . . and in the economic system of world capitalism as a whole."

It is but a small step from this accusation to the charge that Jews actually "collaborated" in the Nazi genocide. A recent exhibition of Soviet art featured a painting showing a Nazi soldier and a Jewish prisoner with a Star of David, and both grinning over a pile of corpses!

Yet not even a whisper can be uttered in the official media of Brezhnev's Russia about the millions who perished in Stalin's genocide. There are corpses, and corpses.

Varlam Shalamov, a Soviet writer with even greater experience of corpses in Stalin's concentration camps than Solzhenitsyn, has written:

> "Kolyma was a great test of the moral strength of man . . . of ordinary human morality, and 99% of the people have not passed that test."

This sober conclusion about human behaviour in an extreme situation evokes melancholy reminiscences about those of us who observed it from the outside. Can one ever forget how a great part of the Left passed that test during "the low, dishonest decade" of the 1930s, when a *Daily Worker* headline on the Moscow Trial screamed: SHOOT THE REPTILES! Khrushchev's speech came as a shock to the "progressives." What has happened since to their *unbewältigte Vergangenheit*, their own "unmastered past"?

On the face of it, this past may seem to have been overcome on the Left. European Social Democracy was, on the whole, never pro-Soviet; and with the emergence of "the New Left" and "Euro-Communism" practically everybody seems to be condemning the Stalinism of yesterday. French Communists, who first denounced Khrushchev's speech as "a bourgeois falsification" and then maintained that they were not "aware" of its authenticity because their delegates at the 20th Congress of the CPSU had just "not been told about it", finally admitted in *l'Humanité* that this threadbare excuse was indeed a lie. British Communists have denounced the Nazi-Soviet Pact for its "disastrous consequences" (which, as the *Morning Star* of 23 August admitted, included "handing over German Communists who had sought political asylum in the Soviet Union").[2] Those Communists who disagreed with such bold criticism said that the "Soviet-Nazi Pact [was] no crime" (*Morning Star*, 31 August). But although they added that "of course we should remember the crimes and mistakes committed by Stalin", their real attitude is better reflected in a remark by one of the disgruntled delegates at the '79 Party congress: "Let's stop picking our sores. . . ." (*The Guardian*, 12 November).

SUCH "PICKING" has always been extremely private. The neo-Stalinists within the Euro-Communist parties (like the Soviet *apparatchiki* themselves) are hypersensitive about it. None of the Communist parties, in Europe or elsewhere, has treated Stalin's genocide in anything like a forthright manner. The reality of these crimes is avoided by euphemisms, circumlocutions, evasions, and, above all, when an actual Orwellian "memory hole" is not involved, by making historical references as unspecific as possible.

Is it just a question of a few unreconstructed Stalinists and fellow-travellers (like the late D. N.

[2] The article also referred, without making clear what it was about, to "the secret protocol" of the Pact which divided Poland between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. The existence of this protocol has never been admitted by Soviet historians. They continue to denounce those who "spread an utterly false argument that the Soviet-German Pact gave Hitler the 'green light' to attack Poland." (P. Zhilin, "The Lessons of the Past Must Not Be Forgotten", *Pravda*, 31 August 1979.)

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Pritt who until his death still retained his belief in the veracity of the Moscow Trials)?

Even the "critical" Communists only hint at what they know, without making it explicit. Previously they did not want to face the facts, now they do not like to live with them, although, in one form or another, they cannot help admitting them retrospectively. Any reader who had to rely on Western Communist publications would find it very difficult indeed to comprehend what happened in Russia under Stalin. He would know about "certain negative phenomena" or even crimes. But even though a reference to "millions of prisoners" in Stalin labour camps was once made in the *Morning Star*, its significance could not make much impact on the imagination of its readers, who are so sheltered from such themes that they can hardly visualise what it was all about.

Any such "anti-Soviet" writings are sedulously ignored. Solzhenitsyn is dismissed as "a reactionary." Neither his *Gulag Archipelago* nor any other book on the subject was ever reviewed, even negatively, in the *Morning Star*. Instead one can read pathetic (and euphemistic) little homilies, such as the assurance of the Party secretary, Gordon McLennan, that "We have always made clear that our disagreement with some actions taken in Socialist countries is from the point of view of principle..." (12 November). Nor are the French or Italian Communists more candid in this respect. Truth is contraband, to be smuggled in when the dark opportunity presents itself. But then it serves only as another apologetic rationalisation. The pieces of such black-market "truth" only confuse spirits rather than make them free.

The official verdict of the French Communist Party that Stalin's Russia was on balance a factor for progress is a dismal illustration of this. (Even so, the book *l'URSS et Nous*, dealing in part with the Communist "unmastered past", was attacked in the Soviet press, in spite of its restrained character and the French Party blessing.) The real psychological background to the ideological reluctance to settle scores with the past squarely can be seen in the intellectual meandering of the French palaeo- and ex- "true believers." More than in any other country, the scene in France is full of ex-Stalinists baring their souls; by now their memoirs could fill several bookshelves. Their belated discovery of the obvious throws light on one phenomenon only: the varieties of self-deception.

Who Lied about the Camps?

THE LATEST TWO SUCH MEMOIRS have a particular bearing on the problem of reactions in the West to Stalin's genocide. Claude Morgan and André Wurmser were the two principal protagonists of the memorable 1949 trial in Paris—the libel suit brought by a Soviet Russian defector, Victor Kravchenko, against the Communist weekly, *Les Lettres Françaises* (of which Morgan was then the editor and Wurmser one of the chief contributors). It was the first occasion on which "the Gulag Archipelago" received worldwide publicity. Kravchenko, whose best-selling book *I Chose Freedom*, published in 1946, described the Stalinist terror, the purges, and the system of forced labour camps, produced a number of witnesses who testified from their own experience to the truth of his assertions. Among them was Margarete Buber-Neumann, the author of *Under Two Dictators*, who had been imprisoned in both Stalin's and Hitler's concentration camps, and Alex Weissberg, who had had a somewhat similar experience and had described it in his book *Conspiracy of Silence* (in the USA entitled *The Witches' Sabbath*). Both of them had been handed over by the *NKVD* to the *Gestapo* in 1940. David Rousset, a former inmate of a German concentration camp, found himself ostracised by all his "progressive" friends because of his support for Kravchenko.

The defence mobilised some of the best-known names of the French intellectual Left: Joliot-Curie, Vercors, d'Astier de la Vigerie, Pierre Cot, Roger Garaudy, using them as witnesses to discredit Kravchenko and his outrageous assertions about "the Fatherland of all progressive humanity" and its "great Leader and Teacher." They all declared that Kravchenko's book was a tissue of lies and that the testimonies of the eye-witnesses were the anti-Soviet inventions of reactionary émigrés manipulated by the US State Department and intelligence services. Pierre Daix, Morgan's successor as editor of *Les Lettres Françaises*, wrote a special pamphlet for the occasion: *Les Camps Concentrationnaires Soviétiques n'Existent Pas* ("Soviet Concentration Camps Do Not Exist"). And the lawyer of *Les Lettres Françaises*, Joe Nordmann, even paid homage in his concluding speech to the "objective manner" in which the notorious prosecutor in the Moscow Trials, Andrei Vyshinsky, had conducted the cross-examination of the accused.

Such was the atmosphere in post-War France that Kravchenko, despite the documentary evidence presented on the Soviet camps, was awarded only the symbolic minimum damages of "*un franc*", a judgment which *Le Monde* (25 September 1979) characterises even today as "a homage rendered to the character and the past of the Communist writers who led the attack on Kravchenko." And such is the persistence of "progressive" stereotypes that when 17 years later Victor Kravchenko tragically took his own life, the London *Times* (26 February 1966) published an obituary which was full of cheap ironies and

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hostility. It did not mention his suicide. It characterised him as "one of the noisiest and most controversial figures at the height of the 'Cold War' ", serving "cold-war propaganda." As it came after Khrushchev's and Solzhenitsyn's "revelations", the *Times* obituary archly admitted that "there was, for all its exaggeration, a strong basis of truth in Kravchenko's autobiography, *I Chose Freedom*, with its lurid stories of the Stalin purges in the 1930s, with its harrowing accounts of the police terror in Russia. . . ." Far from being any kind of "exaggeration", Kravchenko's account was actually something of an understatement of the extent of Stalin's genocide. In reality the Gulag was even more "harrowing", as not only Solzhenitsyn, but also Nadezhda Mandelshtam, Shalamov and so many others have testified. Kravchenko had no comparable literary talent, but he did have an important message for which he was vilified in the West, not yet ready for "premature truth." If he was "lurid", so was Anna Akhmatova's *Requiem*. However, it was not a question of literary quality, but of the unwillingness of the "progressive intelligentsia" at that time to face the truth about Soviet reality.

TODAY, 30 YEARS AFTER the trial, Claude Morgan has finally admitted in his autobiography, *Don Quichotte et les Autres*, that "Kravchenko was right"! He confesses that after Kravchenko's suicide he wanted "to pay him homage, but it was as yet too early. . . ." He reveals that the original article, "How Kravchenko was Fabricated", published in *Les Lettres Françaises* under the signature of "Sim Thomas" (presented as a US journalist), was in fact written by André Ulmann, a French contributor to the journal. Morgan and Wurmser had claimed that Kravchenko "was not even the author of his book."

André Wurmser, however, has evidently refused to do a *mea culpa* in his recent autobiography, *Fidèlement Vôtre*. For him, "Kravchenko was not telling the truth, he was deforming it. . . ." Answering Morgan, who reproached him for upholding his old charges against Kravchenko ("One must know how to admit being in the wrong; I am afraid he is not sincere"),[3] Wurmser now explains in *l'Humanité* (20 September) that Kravchenko's

> "book, or rather the book which he signed . . . reduced the whole history of the USSR to Stalinist arbitrary measures. He mixed fiction with one aspect of Soviet reality about which the Communists were ignorant at that time. . . . We were unfortunately mistaken in asserting, as all progressives did the world over (contrary to what the 20th Congress of the CPSU later revealed to be the truth), that the camps did not exist in the Soviet Union. The condemnation which our Party pronounced, confirmed, and repeated against the methods of Stalin needs no reminders. . . ."

So much for Kravchenko, so much for genocide. . . .

Unlike Claude Morgan, who still considers himself a Communist although he has left the Party, Pierre Daix has made a radical break with his past, as his books (*J'ai cru au matin* and *Les Chemins du Printemps*) testify. He became an early advocate of Solzhenitsyn in France and was prepared to admit his past errors. The other protagonist of the Kravchenko affair, Roger Garaudy, left the Party after the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, although he declared that "Khrushchev's [1956] speech was a turning point of my dreams" (*Le Nouvel Observateur*, 29 October). Until then, he confessed, "I could not imagine that Stalin was a dictator."[4]

IRONICALLY ENOUGH, if their past presents a problem to the Communists, their present practices no longer provoke such censure from the Socialists and the New Left as they did in olden times. They show themselves increasingly reluctant to condemn in a clear and outspoken manner even such barbaric Communist actions as those which have occurred in Cambodia and Viet Nam. As one Social Democrat, Carl Gershman (*Commentary*, October 1979), reminds us: "On these questions, as on all others regarding brutality by Communist régimes, the Socialist International has remained silent. . . ."

Similarly, the New Left, whose emergence was influenced by a reaction to Khrushchev's "revelations" about Stalin, has become less unfriendly towards the Brezhnev régime which has ended "de-Stalinisation." The closing of the circle of confusion can be seen in a *New Left Review* editorial (September–October 1979):

> "One of the most salient features of the later '70s has been a widespread recrudescence of Cold War politics in the West. The relative novelty of this second round of orchestrated international reaction has been its overwhelming concentration on the USSR as a target . . . it has become an increasing vogue among sections of the Left as well, which in their frustration at the impasse

[3] In an astonishing sentence Wurmser wrote: "One should not judge what some of us thought by what we have said."

[4] George Bernard Shaw observed (in November 1934), quite without his wonted Shavian wit, that Stalin is "a simple secretary of the supreme organ of control who is liable to be dismissed from his position in ten minutes if his performance is not satisfactory. . . ."

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of the labour movement in the West, have taken to discharging their aggression upon the USSR."

Poor Workers' Paradise, still being set upon by malefic scribblers! Thus not only do we have ex-Communists and ex-Stalinists, we also now have ex-New Leftists and we are even beginning to get new Old Leftists. The lessons of Genocide and Gulag are lost on secular salvationists and their fellow-travellers, old and new. In his conversation with Régis Debray (published in the French journal, *Change*), Noam Chomsky has been ironical about Western intellectuals who, according to him, gave too much "publicity" to the Cambodian genocide. He detected conspiracy (*Le Monde*, 22 March 1979):

> "It is striking that the discovery of Gulag was made at the end of the Vietnam war, when it was convenient to deflect attention to other things."

The conspiratorial ways of the Western press are indeed far-reaching! For Régis Debray Western perversion of truth goes even further: for him Gulag "is a word imposed by imperialism". . . .

Cults & Crimes

SANTAYANA'S acute characterisation of "those who do not learn from history" (being condemned to repeat it) and Hegel's melancholy reflection on "the only thing we learn from history" (that we never learn from history) do not go far enough. It may be that each generation fails to learn from the experience of its predecessors; but some generations, one suspects, even fail to learn from their own experience.

When the generation of the 1930s was replaced by the generation of the 1960s, and the cult of "good Uncle Joe" was replaced by the cult of good "Uncle Ho", perhaps the most infuriating aspect of the new decade for those who remembered the old one was not just the feeling of *déjà vu* and the re-emergence of daft political attitudes, but the fact that so many people who should have known better were ready to embrace them and join the Gadarene rush. The naïve "revolutionary" utopianism of "the kids" has been matched by the postures of their elders trying to re-acquire political virginity. As Norman Podhoretz recollects in his just-published memoir, *Breaking Ranks*:

> "To be pro-American in the '60s was like being anti-Soviet in the '30s, for just as radicalism then had been tied to support of the Soviet Union as the centre of Socialist hope, so radicalism now increasingly defined itself in opposition to the United States as the major obstacle to the birth of a better world."

For the New Left intelligentsia, America became "the moral equivalent of Nazi Germany." Its whole history was "obscene", said Susan Sontag, based as it was on genocide. The war in Viet Nam was not a defence of South Viet Nam against the communist expansionism of Hanoi, but an imperialist action of *Amerika*. The respectable sympathisers of the "Movement" among the "radical rich", the media, and the political élite—and even many who did not share such jejune political perspectives—had little critical, sceptical awareness of the possible consequences of their attitudes. The "kids" were chanting

> *"Hey, hey, hey, LBJ*
> *How many kids you killed today?"*

Their elders pooh-poohed any danger of the "domino effect" following American defeat in Viet Nam. Warnings that there might be a bloodbath when the Communists took over (and other unpleasant consequences for the inhabitants of Indochinese states) were derided and firmly rejected as the scaremongering of the "hawks." The intelligentsia and its leading ladies began to make their tours to Hanoi. Mary McCarthy and Jane Fonda symbolised the merger of the '30s and the '60s. Once again a "brave new world" was in the offing.

Où sont les neiges d'antan? Where are all those self-righteous expectations and blithely complacent predictions of the "progressives" and the "doves"? There was not just a bloodbath, there was *genocide* in Cambodia. There was an "oceanic Holocaust" in Viet Nam. There was an invasion of Cambodia by Viet Nam. The moment the "boat people" disappeared from the television screens, the emaciated bodies of Cambodian children made their horrific appearance.

AND WHAT HAPPENED to the "progressive" journalists and singers engaged in the anti-Viet Nam war movement? Once again, as in the aftermath of the 1930s, some discovered the consequences of their illusions, others persisted in them.

Five days before the *Khmer Rouge* troops entered Phnom Penh, the *New York Times* reporter there, Sydney H. Schanberg, wrote that "it is difficult to imagine how [the] lives [of ordinary people] could be anything but better with the Americans gone." He explained that

> "Wars nourish brutality and sadism and sometimes certain people are executed by the victors, but it would be tendentious to forecast such abnormal behaviour as a national policy under a Communist government once the war is over. Cambodia, being a country blessed with rich agricultural land and a relatively small population, can be revived without any major reconstruction program. . . ."

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Shortly after, having witnessed the brutal removal of the whole population from Phnom Penh by the victorious *Khmer Rouge*, Mr Schanberg became (to his credit) the first reporter to describe the horrors of the "evacuation", literally the first step on the road to genocide in Cambodia. Four-and-a-half years later (on 12 October 1979), he reported the story of his colleague, a Cambodian journalist, Dith Pran, employed by the *New York Times*, who reached Bangkok and told him about the "true hell" he had been through: the reduction of his country's population from seven to four million by massacres and starvation.

None So Blind . . .

DURING THE FOUR-AND-A-HALF YEARS between these two dispatches the world has gradually learned and generally recognised the bestial behaviour of the *Khmer Rouge* and the magnitude of their crimes. But the "progressive intelligentsia" was at first reluctant to acknowledge them. In America Leo Cherne and his colleagues from the International Rescue Committee and Freedom House were the first who went to Thailand to investigate the case and to produce an authoritative report based on extensive interviews with the Cambodian refugees. It was, however, totally disregarded by the secular "progressives" from *The Nation* and the "progressive" Catholics from the *Commonweal.*

Similarly in Britain, it was Bernard Levin, and not John Pilger with his Hanoi sympathies, who was writing articles attacking the chief apologist of the Pol Pot régime in this country, Dr Malcolm Caldwell. At that time, in the liberal *Guardian* and the socialist *Tribune*, Dr Caldwell tried hard to deny or minimise testimony about the catastrophe. He contemptuously rejected Levin's accusations. He did not feel that "those who did not subscribe to his [Levin's] fantasy [are] in effect mentally ill and comparable to blind apologists for Hitler and Stalin." He would not commit himself to any particular figure, but with a great display of moral indignation argued that there were only "scores, or hundreds of thousands" killed and not a million or more. He quoted approvingly an American "delegate" (*Tribune*, 8 September 1978):

> "The new Government, fighting for its survival against all this counter-revolutionary activity, *had to deal swiftly and sternly with* every instance of sabotage and subversion. Undoubtedly, this was a bloody process that may well have entailed some excesses and mistakes. But without revolutionary violence against the enemy, the revolution itself would have been crushed in its infancy."

You can't make an omelette. . . .

Dr Caldwell was killed in Phnom Penh while visiting the land of Pol Pot. We do not know who shot him. During his travels he was reported to have paraphrased the remark of Lincoln Steffens about the Soviet Union by saying: "I have seen the past and it works" (*International Herald Tribune*, 27 December 1978). *Tribune* (29 December 1978) published an obituary on the "tragic death of Cambodia's friend", a warm tribute to Malcolm Caldwell by his CND friend, Peggy Duff. An obituary note by John Gittings in that once distinguished bastion of humane liberalism, *The Guardian* (27 December 1978) said:

> "Caldwell attempted (notably in an article in the *Guardian* on May 8) to understand the stories (often exaggerated) of mass executions and an enforced return to the land in Cambodia after the revolutionary victory of April 1975. And in a reply to a harsh attack on him by Bernard Levin in the *Times*, he argued first that retribution against collaboration with the US-backed Lon Nol régime of 1970–75 was understandable, and secondly that the new policy of 'taking agriculture as the base' made good economic sense. . . . Caldwell was an irreplaceable teacher and comrade whose work will undoubtedly suffer the customary fate of being better appreciated after his death."

Christopher Hitchins was rather more critical in the *New Statesman* (5 January 1979), arguing that "the access to power of the *Khmer Rouge* has been the excuse for a truly epoch-making bloodbath" and that "Caldwell, in some of his sallies into print, was reduced to haggling over the exact number of those killed." But he almost found an extenuating circumstance in the fact that "the more he was attacked by the Bernard Levins of this world, the more certain he became that he was right (a dangerous logic, as students of the 1930s will know)." And there was the inevitable rationalisation, which anticipated the "documentary proof" later to be provided by William Shawcross: "The genocidal American bombing was also, it need hardly be added, a midwife to the Cambodian régime." When *Tribune* also came out against the Pol Pot régime on this "controversial" problem, Dr Caldwell's sister, Isobel Colquhoun, protested vigorously (*Tribune*, 19 January 1979):

> "I was deeply shocked when I read both your editorial and Chris Mullin's article on Cambodia (*Tribune*, January 12). They were both written as though my brother, Malcolm Caldwell, had never existed. The same well-worn clichéd themes (that the Khmer Rouge Government ruled by terror, that there were large-scale government directed massacres and that there were no desperate reasons for evacuating Phnom Penh) were trundled out with no reference

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whatever to what Malcolm had written questioning these hypotheses. . . . You might have given some indication that there was another side to the story, particularly as Malcolm had written on the subject in your columns not so long ago."

Are there no limits to brazenness? Soon *Tribune* (16 November 1979) was waxing indignant on the basis of a premise which not so long ago it had treated as controversial. Now it mustered enough anger to condemn

". . . one of the more cynical episodes in the recent history of British foreign policy where Britain—in common with most other Western governments—has continued to recognize a régime which is openly acknowledged to be responsible for mass murder and which controls less than 10% of Kampuchea."

The pattern is not unfamiliar. We have seen it in the belated anti-Stalinism of old fellow-travellers and in the belated recognition of the horrors of new genocides. As it happens, three weeks later the British government had withdrawn recognition of the Pol Pot régime (without recognising the puppet Government of Heng Samrin).

CONFUSING A TIGER WITH AN UNDERDOG has been a perennial tendency among "the progressives." One is reminded not only how many of them supported Stalin's "legitimate" ambitions, but also how others, in spite of ideological antipathy, tended to feel that one should not be beastly to Hitler, because of his "legitimate" concerns with the "wicked" Versailles Treaty.[5]

Before World War II, *Tribune* (under William Mellor and H. J. Hartshorn) and the *New Statesman* (under Kingsley Martin) supported the Stalin régime, endorsing the Moscow Trials and the Soviet-Nazi Pact. Later, they at least had the excuse (also used by repentant Nazis) that they simply "did not know about" genocide. (The repentant French Stalinists, like Claude Morgan, just could not believe in the existence of the Soviet concentration camps.) But this time the genocide was not unprecedented, therefore there were no similar barriers to the imagination.

For the pro-Vietnamese Communists truth-telling became expedient only when the Vietnamese began their propaganda offensive against the Pol Pot régime. The veteran Stalinist propagandist, Wilfred Burchett—who had concocted the stories about US "germ warfare" in Korea—described Cambodian atrocities (in *The Guardian*, 11 May 1979) and estimated the genocide's victims at 2–3 million. Even the French Communists, never strong on veracity, began to publish true stories: for instance, the account by Lola Sivath, cousin of Prince Sihanouk, describing how she lost her husband and three daughters:

"Seeing her father standing beneath the mango tree, my daughter began running. One of the Pol Pot soldiers fired from his rifle and shot her in the head. She fell on the ground. Then they shot my husband before my eyes. . . . What wanton cruelty! Had I not been a witness and a victim I would not have believed it was possible. Earlier, when I saw films about the Nazi concentration camps, they had seemed incredible to me. . . ."

This appeared in *l'Humanité* on 15 September 1979. A few days later it carried the reply of André Wurmser to Claude Morgan about Kravchenko having "deformed the truth." The Party-line can change; but some lines stay hard and fast.

THE SOVIET UNION has not for a long time shown any concern about what was happening in Cambodia. Until well into 1978 (i.e. for three years) there was not a squeak in the Soviet press on Cambodian atrocities. On the contrary, as long as Moscow hoped that it could regain some influence with the *Khmer Rouge* régime to counter that of Peking, it was perfectly ready to disregard such trifles.

In 1976, when Pol Pot became a prime minister of "democratic Kampuchea", Kosygin sent a congratulatory telegram (published in *Pravda*). In October 1977, the Soviet foreign-affairs weekly, *New Times*, acclaimed Pol Pot's "progressive social and economic reforms" in an approving article. In 1978 the Central Committee of the CPSU welcomed the formal announcement of the existence of the Communist Party of Kampuchea. Only later in that year did the Soviet press begin to attack the "monster régime" of Pol Pot and to discover its genocidal character. So it is not surprising that the Soviet book on the subject, called *Kampuchea: From Tragedy to Revival* (Politizdat, 1979) contains Soviet press material from 1978 and 1979 only.

Belated "indignation" about *Khmer Rouge* massacres is a purely political function of Soviet foreign policy interests. It would not have been expressed if "Democratic Kampuchea" had chosen neutrality or a pro-Soviet position in the Sino-Soviet conflict. When it comes to genocide, the

[5] Commenting in a letter (of 22 January 1935) to Robert Vansittart about the pilgrimages to Hitler of the British Labour "progressives" like George Lansbury and Clifford Allen, the British ambassador in Berlin, Sir Eric Phipps, wrote:

". . . One of the very odd features of a very odd situation is the anxiety of Hitler's political opponents in all countries to interview and negotiate with him. . . . The more German pacifists he throws into his concentration camps the more of that ilk arrive from abroad to see him."

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Soviet Union must first confront its own past, before it can have any title to condemn the imitators of its own paradigmatic original.

Eggs & Omelettes

FACED WITH THE MORAL PROBLEM presented by the sequel to their own victory, the members and sympathisers of the anti-Viet Nam war movement in the USA began to adopt different positions. One of its singing bards, Pete Seeger, an enthusiastic Stalinist in the past, has "found Jesus" (without apparently losing Stalin). Joan Baez, another singer who played an important part in opposing the Viet Nam war, condemned Hanoi for its violations of human rights and invited many prominent participants in the "movement" to sign her letter of protest. 84 "celebrities" signed, but others refused. William Kunstler wrote in the *Village Voice* that he "would never join in a public denunciation of a socialist country"; and Jane Fonda refused to associate herself with the protest, saying that the charges against Hanoi are "inaccurate" and "not substantiated." She wrote to Joan Baez:

> "Your action only aligns you with the most narrow and negative elements in our country who continue to believe that Communism is worse than death."

The ensuing "battle of advertisements" between the two show-biz political gurus would have been comic if the subject was not so tragic.

Shortly before, there was a "battle of posters" in Italy in which the terrorist organisation, *La Prima Linea*, accused the official Italian Communist Party of supporting the genocide attempt of the Vietnamese invading Cambodia, while the PCI of course made the reverse—better substantiated—charge. It was, I believe, the very first time in history that Communists had accused each other of genocide.

Both proved right. After the genocidal outrages of Pol Pot, the Vietnamese "liberators" of Cambodia contributed to the calamity of mass starvation by confiscating seed grains and damaging agriculture. Later, they faced the hunger catastrophe quite cynically, making acceptance of Western aid conditional on their control of its distribution. They also began to settle tens of thousands of Vietnamese in the depopulated Cambodia.

One celebrity who travelled to Hanoi in the past, Mary McCarthy, said that she "might have signed the Joan Baez protest about the boat people, but I was not asked" (*The Observer*, 14 October 1979). However, she did offer some regrets about her trip to Hanoi:

> "I'm ashamed to say, for instance, how many suitcases containing clothes I took to North Viet Nam. . . ."

Let's hope that Miss McCarthy will in future have less embarrassment with her Left luggage. The dress rehearsals of the 1930s and the 1960s should be of some help.

IN BRITAIN THE BATTLE among the ex-"Vietniks" was fought out between Richard Gott, the features editor of *The Guardian*, and John Pilger from the *Daily Mirror*. Richard Gott regretted that the Pol Pot régime "has been so fiercely pilloried abroad", that he had been compared to Adolf Hitler, and that his own paper had called Pol Pot's actions "monstrous." Like Professor Noam Chomsky in America, he expressed doubts about the extent of the slaughter and quoted a figure of "something between 100,000 and 300,000 [who] could have been killed" (*The Guardian*, 12 November 1979). John Pilger easily disposed of these arguments and, for good measure, added a reminder about "Henry Kissinger's lethal complicity in Cambodia's ordeal" (14 November).

Ever since the appearance of William Shawcross' book, *Sideshow*, this last assertion has become an ideological life-belt for both Old and New Leftists. They were perplexed, confused, and somewhat uneasy about the organised murder of the "gentle people" and needed a new rationalisation to retain their self-righteousness. Shawcross provided it; hence the popular notoriety of his book.

His fundamental argument is that by bombing and invading the Viet Minh bases in Cambodia, the US "destabilised" it, ended its precarious "neutrality", and by "brutalising" the *Khmer Rouge* indirectly contributed to the genocide. "Cambodia was not a mistake; it was a crime." All the dispirited protesters who not so long ago were marching with posters demanding *Stop the Killing!* could breathe more easily without, however, applying the slogan to the new, unexpectedly more murderous situation; this would have been ideologically very awkward indeed.

Sympathetic reviewers hailed the Shawcross book for its scholarly qualities and the sophistication of its arguments. Irving Howe described it in *Dissent* (Fall 1979) as an "overpowering and meticulous study." Unfortunately, the compliments are exaggerated; the reasoning is specious, and, as some reviewers discovered, the scholarship is not flawless either.

On Shawcross's logic, one could attribute moral responsibility for the Holocaust to "Bomber" Harris rather than Hitler. The alleged causative connection is a myth. It was the Viet Minh who first violated the neutrality of Cambodia; the Americans only reacted against attacks from the

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military sanctuaries established there and tolerated by the "neutral" Prince Sihanouk. The general conclusion of the book is not based on the specific documentary material which is paraded as establishing it, but only illustrates its *a priori* character. As Charles Fairbanks Jr. demonstrated (in *The Wall Street Journal* of 2 November 1979), Shawcross applied for the Pentagon documents under the Freedom of Information Act not earlier than March 1977. But already in December 1976,

> "[he] had published in the *Sunday Times* of London a long piece ('Cambodia: the Blame') in which he makes exactly the same argument about American guilt that appears later in the book.... Thus he could not have developed his thesis in response to the newly obtained documents...."

Dr Kissinger's assistant, Peter Rodman, has found that Shawcross used these documents very selectively. For instance, he omitted many references to the detailed descriptions of *Khmer Rouge* totalitarian practices in the areas controlled by them in 1971, i.e. well before US action in Cambodia could have affected it.

In fact the starting-point of Shawcross's reasoning is wrong. If he had a more experienced understanding of totalitarian mentality, he would have put the blame for genocide where it belongs: on the ideological fanaticism of the *Khmer Rouge*, whose leaders learned their revolutionary theory in Paris and applied it ruthlessly and primitively by "wiping the slate clean" and starting a whole new society from scratch. In his book on *Utopia and Revolution*, Melvin J. Lasky provides a variety of historical examples of this revolutionary utopianism. This time the lunacy has gone even further than ever before. As François Ponchaud put it in his *Cambodia, Year Zero* (Penguin, 1978, pp.16, 214):

> "Their ideology has led them to invent a radically new kind of man in a radically new society.... It [was] a perfect application of an ideology pushed to the furthest limit of its own internal logic."

They were not "brutalised", they were brutal. They had to make a brand-new omelette. So, once again, what matter if a few million eggs get broken in the process?

THERE IS NO NEED for rationalisation, just as previously there was no reason for false expectations. It is only "the cuckolds of history" who are always surprised when their expectations of a new utopia end in a new catastrophe, their permanent hopes leading to repeated genocides. *Le Nouvel Observateur* (5 November 1979) reflected:

> "One would have liked to believe that this striking abandonment of the critical spirit is only an exceptional momentary aberration. But it is nothing of the sort. On the contrary, it is a structural trait, a constant in the behaviour of intellectuals...."

A melancholy thought. Some of our "best and brightest" minds tried to love Stalin (even, like Anthony Blunt, becoming *NKVD* agents in "good conscience") and then were confounded by the Gulag. And when they tried to revere Uncle Ho (shouting his name in praise in Western capitals), they were surprised by millions of dead and dying refugees in an Indo-China that was supposed to have been "liberated" at long last from the iniquities of American "imperialism."

It was an uncanny repetition of the self-induced blindness of earlier Communists and fellow-travellers. The same mentality, "born again", manifested itself among "progressives" in the new period. Just as in the past they denied the existence of Stalin's *Gulag*, so now they denied Pol Pot's genocide. No argument was too thin to be used, no régime too obnoxious to be defended, if it was anti-Western. Again, the best available evidence was rejected on the same spurious grounds that victims' testimonies are "unreliable." Like those who refused to listen to the reports from Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany, Noam Chomsky now argued that the refugees from Cambodia were not to be given credence, that they "tend to report what they believe their interlocutors wish to hear" (*The Nation*, 25 June 1977). Quoting profusely from odd and misleading sources, he presented a "scholarly" conclusion that "highly qualified specialists who have studied the full range of evidence available ... concluded that executions [in Cambodia] have numbered at most in thousands." The same line was taken by George C. Hildebrand and Gareth Porter in their book *Cambodia, Starvation and Revolution* (Monthly Review Press,' 1976) and many others in the USA. The parallel with the 1930s and '40s is striking: the new "progressives", while rejecting the attitude to Stalin of their predecessors, the Pritts and the Webbs, displayed the same credulousness. In this historical encore, a "true believer's" faith once more replaced critical intelligence. As François Ponchaud pointed out in his book, "Their only sources of evaluation [of the situation in Cambodia] are deliberately chosen official statements...."

Why was there no instinctive resonance among "progressives" to the horrors of genocide? Was it just a general reluctance to face appalling realities? No, the blinkers were in their ideological prejudices. Their ideologies inhibited them, stopped them from recognising the horrors, prevented a humane concern with the skeletal figures who could only remind one painfully of the haggard *KZ-niks* and *Zeks* of the Nazi and Soviet concentration camps.

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What a miserable irony of closed minds joined to hardened hearts!—that those who were so often branded "bleeding hearts" were so cold-bloodedly inclined to disregard the crimes of genocide.

All the *post hoc* casuistries and rationalisations cannot disguise this failure in the supreme test of professed humanitarianism. The elementary rules of intellectual hygiene require that this should be remembered in the 1980s.

A FINAL WORD about the pitfalls of myths and horrors in our day. In his Column (ENCOUNTER, October 1979) *R* wrote: "Dr Kissinger can murder a few million Cambodians on the Machiavellian principle that the end justifies the means. . . ."

I was never very well disposed to Dr Kissinger's policies, but I find this allegation monstrous. It is of the type which naturally finds its way to the *New Statesman* rather than ENCOUNTER. It echoes, of course, William Shawcross who in *Sideshow* attributes moral responsibility for the genocide in Cambodia under Pol Pot to Dr Kissinger. Shawcross' emotions about Cambodia are understandable, but his moral judgment is confused. His is a familiar kind of reasoning which manages to shift the blame for the crimes of totalitarian régimes on to their victims or their opponents.[6]

It was not surprising that in the USA (where it appeared first) his book was eagerly seized by the ideological orphans of the Viet Nam war. As I have said above, it was a time when some of them began having second thoughts about their "Vietnik" expectations and their own role during this war.

[6] After the occupation of Warsaw in 1939 the Germans put up posters with a photograph of destruction caused in the Polish capital by their own bombing. The caption read: "*England, This Is Your Doing*!"

Blunt Aside

WHATEVER *the reasons for the duality in the lives of the representatives of what Alistair Cooke called "the Generation on Trial"—variously referred to as "doublethink", "controlled schizophrenia",* trahison des clercs, *or "the climate of treason"—surely the rationalisation offered by Anthony Blunt is the most unconventional. When he was busy spying for Stalin at the time of the Soviet pact with Hitler, he also published a book on* Artistic Theory in Italy, 1450–1600. *In the Introduction (dated 1940), he thanked "Mr Guy Burgess [for] the stimulus of constant discussion and suggestions on all the more basic points at issue." For a scholar with a reputation for subtlety, his interpretation of the period is based on black-and-white Marxist simplicities:*

> **"By about 1530 the attempts of the Papacy to form a powerful secular State in Italy had failed. . . . Instead of a sense of security men felt the general disturbance of events, which seemed to threaten the existence of the Catholic Church and, with it, of the whole Italian society. . . . After 1530 the Papacy was still the most powerful single State in Italy, but it was a changed Papacy. . . . [It] moved from a leading place among the progressive States of Italy to one of reaction."**

One can perhaps detect here, retrospectively, some thoughts of a more contemporary relevance. But, whatever the case, after Blunt's unmasking, a surprising new rationalisation has emerged from the implied aesthetico-historical parallels. As The Sunday Times *(18 November) reported, Professor Blunt, who was until recently the official art adviser to the Queen, said to a friend:*

> **"The Florentine Army was fighting the Papal Army and Benvenuto Cellini was on the Florentine side. During a lull in the battle a voice came from the Papal lines: 'Benvenuto, the Pope wants you to work for him.' Cellini threw away his weapons, went over to the Papal Army and became a silversmith for the Pope. When he had finished his work, he returned to Florence where he was received with honour and rejoicing because he was a great artist."**

The Marxian dialectic is a marvellous instrument. As every leftish schoolboy learns, the British bourgeoisie was at first very progressive—it started the Industrial Revolution, and all that—but then it became very reactionary. It tried to preserve a powerful state but it failed; and "men felt the general disturbance of events." Then Blunt heard the voice from what he considered the "progressive" side: "Anthony, Stalin wants you to work for him." So he became the secret silversmith for the Vozhd *in the Kremlin.*

But the dramaturgy was confused, and the analogies wild. Soon Blunt was left with a threadbare rationalisation. Did he really expect the turncoat prodigal son also to be greeted with "honour and rejoicing" because, after all, he was a great art-historian? A host of letter-writers to The Times—*mostly his own London students and colleagues—rushed into print in his defence to make the same point: art is long, and treason's only for a season. . . .*

L.L.

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Joan Baez and Jane Fonda were locked in fierce polemic about the behaviour of Hanoi after the "liberation", and so were their "progressive" followers. They had been neither impressed nor distressed by earlier Viet Cong atrocities. After all, terrible things do happen during a war (such as the cold-blooded Huế murders—but there were no "excuses" for My Lai). Yet now, the sheer size of the horror—the millions liquidated in Communist Cambodia, the fleeing mass of Vietnamese "boat people"—has made them distinctly uneasy. Even Noam Chomsky, as his letter in the same issue of ENCOUNTER testifies, finds it necessary to obfuscate his own position on the matter.[7] His concern about the *exact number* of the victims of genocide in Cambodia reminds one of the Nazi apologists, like Rassinier, who argue that Hitler killed "only" 1.2 million Jews, not 6 million. . . .

For this type of mentality Shawcross' book was a godsend. It was enthusiastically received in the USA by the "liberal" *Nation*, and excerpts from it were reproduced in our own *New Statesman*. It provided a Freudian "defence mechanism" for the troubled simpletons on the Left. The blame for the whole Cambodian nightmare could now be put where it belonged: on Dr Kissinger! He was presented as a butcher, with axe and hands dripping with blood (in the best *Pravda* or *Krokodil* style) on the cover cartoon of the *New Statesman*. After that, all good and true progressives had their doubts assuaged—as if the specific wartime US bombings of the "Ho Chi Minh trail" were somehow part-and-parcel of a Communist régime's peacetime genocidal purge of its own population—and they could now proceed on their usual ideological course with lily-white consciences.

Such scapegoating and such reversals are not exactly new. In answer to Mr James Fenton who had argued in the *New Statesman* of 6 January 1978 that "it was America that set the process going in Cambodia", a writer in ENCOUNTER (May 1978), put the matter forcefully:

> "So the Americans are guilty! And who is guilty of the Gulag Archipelago? Presumably Winston Churchill and the Allied Intervention 'that set the process going.' And who was guilty of the Hitlerian Holocaust? Presumably the vindictive Men of Versailles with their harsh anti-German peace 'that set the process going.' And who is guilty of Idi Amin's massacres in East Africa? Who but the white British Imperialists, the men of the Black Hole of Calcutta and Amritsar and the Hola camps who 'set the process going.' . . . How 'crass' to think, with typical anti-communist McCarthyite hysteria, that the Communists are, truly and deep down, really responsible for the inhumanities committed! How deceptively 'attractive' it is to think that the politicians who commit a specific crime are not the actual criminals!"

In a long letter to *The Economist* (8 September 1979), in his TV talk with David Frost, and in his *Memoirs*, Dr Kissinger tried to refute this type of reasoning, in which William Shawcross confounds front-line military action with non-combative atrocities, and attributes the latter to the former. But will such protests stop the slurs? "Progressive" rationalisations give one the best idea of infinity. The making of ideological myths is, alas, endless.

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[7] In the "Introduction" to his interview with Chomsky (*Men of Ideas*, BBC Publications, 1979, p.204) Bryan Magee wrote:

> "Noam Chomsky has made two international reputations in apparently unrelated fields. The widest is as one of the national leaders of resistance to the Vietnam war. The deepest is as a Professor of Linguistics who, before he was 40 years old, had transformed the nature of his subject."

Whether his "wider reputation" will survive him is doubtful.

Ever since the genocide in Cambodia, he has tried hard to refuse to acknowledge the facts and to minimise the extent of their horror in a series of polemics with François Ponchaud, Jean Lacouture, and Dennis Duncanson. I find something indecent in somebody whose own people have been a target of genocide belittling the tragedy of others who have undergone it too. He makes heavy weather of "scholarship" and "scientific doubt" about the number of victims of the Pol Pot régime; but as Jean Lacouture pointed out in *Le Nouvel Observateur* (20 November 1978):

> "Is it necessary in order to condemn Nazism to prove that it has killed millions (1945) or tens of thousands (1935). . . . Must Chomsky know about one [concentration] camp or a hundred camps in order to denounce Stalinism?"

Chomsky's sophistries are increasingly shrill and inconsistent. He now claims that his writings "contain harsh criticisms of Marxist-Leninist ideology and practice" (*International Affairs*, October 1979, p.595). But here is what he said in an interview which he gave to the *New Left Review* (September–October 1969):

> "It would be a grotesque error to say that Stalin was simply the realization of Leninist principles. . . . There are different strands in Lenin's theories. On the one hand, there is *State and Revolution*, which is basically fine, and on the other hand, there is effective dismantling of the Soviets, there is Kronstadt and the suppression of the Workers' Opposition, which was under Lenin's aegis at least."

The "harsh criticism of Marxist-Leninist ideology and practice" happened to be a naive fundamentalist dissent from a few aspects of Leninism. This is hardly what his readers might infer from his letter to *International Affairs*. They may also be less than clear about his real position on the Cambodian genocide.

All in all, this "Einstein of linguistics", the author of *Language and Responsibility*, converts linguistic energy into a mass of casuistic irresponsibilities.

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The Belknap Press of
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A Passage to India

The Genesis of E. M. Forster's Novel—By R. W. NOBLE

IN LATE 1910 Syed Ross Masood anticipated Forster's declaration of homosexual passion: "I only wish that you & I could live together for ever & though that is a selfish wish yet I feel sorry that it will never come to anything.... You know my great wish is to get *you* to write a book on India ... it will be a great book." Forster had that same year mentioned to Masood, "A man who writes of what he knows, if it's only back stairs intrigues, has a more permanent value; don't you agree?"[1] That year and 1911 also, Forster read everything about India that he could get hold of—from the *Bhagavad Gita* to Alice Perrin's love-stories. Then in 1912 he took up Masood's invitation to visit India.

When Forster returned in 1913 from his visit to the Subcontinent, he began to write Masood's "great book." But at about the time the First World War broke out, he "got stuck", having gone as far as trying to draft his Marabar Caves episode. In 1921 he welcomed a renewed offer of temporary employment in the Hindu Princely State of Dewas Senior. He did not know, and the Rajah seemed not to care, that in 1916 several Anglo-Indian officials had intended to block the Rajah's invitation: a wartime censor in Bombay had notified his superiors that Forster was "a decadent coward and apparently a sexual pervert."[2] Forster nevertheless became the Rajah's private secretary. After he returned home in 1922, he finished writing *A Passage to India*.

Perhaps it is easier now to connect with *A Passage to India* than when this novel came out in 1924. The name of Forster's main setting, "Chandrapore", means "Moon City." It is as if he were envisaging, not only a reconstitution of an India he had seen, but also a dreamland that was about to be displaced, a dreamscape where British people's experiences in India were kaleidoscoped with the popular tradition of English fiction and related lore which might some day be designated "the Matter of India."[3] Forster's text therefore, together with newly-discovered facts, suggests origins which in 1924 were often blurred by polemic feelings.

This novel centres upon Miss Quested's mysterious experience in a Marabar Cave, which results in her hallucinations and her accusation that Dr Aziz had sexually molested her there. In celebration of the centenary of Forster's birth, the late Oliver Stallybrass has given us the definitive text as well as *The Manuscripts of 'A Passage to India'*,[4] which show Forster's originally much different conception of this story. On two of the earliest MS. folios of 1913, Forster sketched out a plan that begins: Aziz "Invites Miss [Quested] to wedding...." On the reverse side of the second folio in question, the notes extend this story-line: "Aziz & Janet [alias Violet, alias Edith, finally Adela] drift into one another's arms—then apart.... Discovers she loves him ... natural the woman should woo: 'I would do it for her.'" It would not be too fanciful, though it is over-simplifying, to see this rejected outline as an expression of one of Forster's sexual reveries about Masood.

[1] Syed Ross Masood and E. M. Forster, MS. Letters (18 November, 20 December and 6 June 1910). Begum Chhatari (formerly Lady Masood) and Mr. J. A. Kidwai (Secretary, Ross Masood Education and Culture Society, Karachi) kindly gave me access to their Forster-Masood letters. Many of Forster's other MS. letters and diaries which relate to *A Passage to India* have been made available by King's College, Cambridge (© The Provost and Scholars of King's College Cambridge).

[2] Bombay Postal Censor, MS. Document (August 1916), India Office Library. With regard to the atmosphere of the Raj before 1924, P. N. Furbank's *E. M. Forster: A Life* (1978) and G. K. Das' *E. M. Forster's India* (1977) offer vivid narrations of Forster's reactions, respectively, as a private person and as a political observer.

[3] Brijen K. Gupta's bibliography, *India in English Fiction* (1973), includes more than 2,000 novels by Anglo-Indian and metropolitan authors whose heyday coincided with the three decades before *A Passage to India* appeared.

[4] Oliver Stallybrass, ed., Abinger Editions, *A Passage to India* and *The Manuscripts of 'A Passage to India'* (London: Arnold, 1979). I am grateful to the late Oliver Stallybrass for his advice as well as for facsimiles of the very early MS. folios that were found at Cambridge after Texas purchased most of the extant MSS. of this novel.

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This abandoned story-line is a reversal of the one that Forster thought was most common in the fiction associated with the British of India, who were then known as Anglo-Indians. Forster observed in "The Indian Boom" (1915) that the stay-at-home's conception of India was often acquired from "Anglo-Indian ladies, and their theme the disaster of inter-marriage; that disaster obsessed and obsesses them, and the novels that exhibit it read as though written on an elephant's back, high above the actualities of the bazaar." Forster went on in that article to praise literature by Tagore and others involved in the Indian cultural and religious revival of those years. In a letter to Masood in 1922 he referred to his abandoned outline for a story about interracial love that would counter the fiction of the "Anglo-Indian ladies" and reach out to the India of authors such as Tagore:

> "When I began the book I thought of it as a little bridge of sympathy between East and West, but this conception has had to go, my sense of truth forbids anything so comfortable."

Did Forster's "sense of truth" cause him to reconsider mainly his direct experiences with Indians, Anglo-Indians and the Indian sub-continent?

IN MID-JANUARY 1913 Forster had arrived to visit his friend, Masood, in the civil station of Bankipore, a suburb of the city of Patna in Bihar. This was the furthest east that Forster then travelled. It was the middle of the Cold Season—the days warm, the evenings bracingly cool, the wind from the west—before the Hot Season would begin in mid-March, prefacing the Rainy Season in mid-June. The Ganges there was sluggish, its alluvial islands shifting, its current flowing close under Bankipore at the western edges of the city. He stayed at Masood's large house in the quarter known as Moradpore, the name he used for the main setting in early drafts of his novel before altering it to "Chandrapore." Forster wrote to his mother that, along the floodbank from the civil station, there straggled "a street 14 miles long edged with hovels", the whole place sinking into the silt where grander predecessors lay buried on top of each other down to the level of Asoka's imperial capital of 250 B.C. As seen from his borrowed bicycle, this place seemed to be "horrible beyond words." Yet from the prospect of his host's rooftop, according to Forster's diary, the city took on a contradictory glamour under a sylvan canopy of "toddy palm, mango" and "malaria-melon trees." Forster's ambiguous observations, which seem to have entered the setting of his novel directly, accord with the imperial gazetteer: "The distant prospect" of the city "is magnificent, though . . . the traveller may be disappointed on a nearer approach" by its "neglect and dilapidation."[5]

In the civil station there, Forster saw the sights then typical of an up-country administrative town in India, because Patna was only then in the process of becoming the capital of the new province of Bihar, separate from Bengal and Calcutta. There was a *maidan* for the open air, an Anglican Church for the look of it, and a Club for recreation and social life. The officials' residences and courthouses were mostly "civil service jobs" interspersed with a few colonnaded neo-classical buildings, most notably Patna College which lay towards the city. Forster seemed to transfer these details also, albeit heightened and pointed, directly into the setting for his novel.

The most remarked-upon sight in Bankipore, however, was officially described as "the monument of a mistake." In his Indian Diary on 25 January, Forster recorded his visit there: "Went up Gola. . . . A beehive ascended by two staircases spirally." The "Gola" (Golghar) was built by the British in 1786, 100 feet high, with lower walls 12 feet thick, and intended, as its inscription stated, "for the perpetual prevention of Famine." This giant granary, in the shape of the bulbous half of an egg, had proved unusable. Its extraordinary feature according to contemporary guidebooks was a "reverberating echo, which answers to the slightest sound." For a visitor there, whether standing inside or peering down from the roof into its darkness, an "eerie effect" resulted from every "movement of his foot on the floor or his lightest whisper" as it beat on "his startled ears."[6] In this instance, the connections between "fact" and the novel are either non-existent or, if we try to relate this feature to the sensational impact of the Marabar Caves' "terrifying echo" on Mrs Moore and Miss Quested, it becomes a connection both dislocated and complicated.

ON 28 JANUARY FORSTER left Bankipore for the Barabar Caves, by a branch-line train that would skirt the Barabar Hills. He recorded in his diary that it was a "wretched" poor area—the grass sparse and coarse, the toddy palms tousled, the nullahs dry, the tanks getting too low for the water-lifts. At the way-station nearest the Barabar Hills, Nawab Imdad Imam and his elephant were waiting to take their party up to the Tank of the Dagger and the Caves. After scrambling up into the

[5] L. S. S. O'Malley, *Patna* (Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat, 1907; rev. edn., 1924), pp. 173–174. O'Malley described the nearby Barabar Caves in his *Gaya* (1906).

[6] Anon., *A Brief Account of Patna and of the Principal Places of Interest* (c. 1905), p. 5.

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howdah via, first, the elephant's heel, then its looped tail as held by a servant, and finally the ropes hanging "over its person", they rode up into the hills of barren, fissured granite. Forster noticed the giant "fingers" of red rock, particularly the pinnacle of stone named the Kawa Dol ("Crow's Swing"). After setting down at their camp, they climbed on foot "in much heat and internal emptiness" to the Caves, which craftsmen had carved out of the granite hillsides in about 250 B.C. These and some of his related observations which appear to have entered his novel agree with the imperial gazetteer: the "remarkable caves" had no sculpture inside, only a "wonderful polish" that seemed to meet and absorb a matchlight. Forster also noted, however, that these places ranked "very high among caves for cheerfulness" and had a "dignified roar" of an echo. This letter, combining such sightseer's enthusiasm with a comment that the caves were "Buddhist", seems to confirm that Forster, in associating a horror with the caves in his novel, had begun to invent his setting.

Yet at the time of this side-trip, the part-time archaeologists Professors Charles Russell and V. H. Jackson, whom Forster had just visited in Patna, were investigating and discussing other aspects of those caves.[7] Their findings associated the Barabar Caves mainly with a long-extinct sect known as the Ajivikas. During the final centuries B.C., this community was persecuted and overwhelmed by the dominant religious communities—Brahminical Hindus, Jains, and Buddhists—whose documents accused the Ajivikas of being atheists, a people who should be execrated for their nihilism and quietism. Whether Forster had heard of this from the Patna College investigators or not, one recalls that in the novel, following Mrs Moore's and Miss Quested's experiences of desolation and horror in the Marabar Caves, we are led to doubt both the police prosecutor, McBryde, who assumed that the Marabar Caves were Buddhist, and also Mr Das, who claimed that they were Jain. How difficult it is, therefore, to detect the connections between Forster's experiences and even the setting of the novel, which in this matter of the "extraordinary" Marabar Caves with their "terrifying" echo recede into speculation.

THE GESTATION of Forster's characters is even harder to glimpse, perhaps because of rather than despite the tendency of the vulgarian in each of us to assume that the novelist's main trick is only to expose parts of himself and his acquaintances to public exhibition. During his January 1913 experiences in Patna, there was first of all, of course, Masood, the aristocratic Moslem whose invitation had brought Forster there. Masood was practising law and beginning to teach part-time at Patna College where he would soon obtain a temporary, then a substantive appointment to the Indian Educational Service. In the earliest extant MS. fragments of Forster's narrative—his expression of the abandoned outline referred to earlier—Aziz is a teacher in the local college. If this rejected beginning seems as if it might be an amalgam of Forster's own experiences and daydreams with Masood in Patna, he quickly distanced his writing from these by altering details such as Aziz's profession and by dropping the interracial love-story.

Fielding, who almost became the central figure in the finished novel, has often been thought to be an autobiographical figure, though many readers have come up with other "models."[8] Forster, when pressed about this, sometimes teased and sometimes misdirected, but occasionally he let slip perhaps more than he intended. This can be seen in an interview in early 1962 with a *New York Times* correspondent who provoked him about Fielding:

> "Good Lord, no, he's not me. Some of his attitudes may be mine, but I remember distinctly whom I based him on—a fellow in the Indian Educational Service. Not a bit like me really."

Later in 1962, Shahazad Masood, a granddaughter of his by then deceased friend, wrote to ask him whether his model for Cyril Fielding was Professor Charles Russell, an Indian Educational Service officer who was posted at Patna College during Forster's visit there and became one of Masood's sponsors for entry into that Service. Forster replied, "There is a touch of Mr Russell in Fielding", but he went on to deprecate any tendency to exaggerate this connection.

In January 1913, Forster mentioned how Russell and his colleague, V. H. Jackson, entertained Masood and him: "Foul as the place is . . . I have met several people, not all very nice. Nice are Russell, a professor at Patna College, archaeologist and political economist. . . ." Forster also recorded that Russell attracted the affection of Masood's relative, Mahmoud, later a Congress nationalist who would become one of Pandit Nehru's cabinet ministers. In 1961 still, Iqbal Husain, as principal

[7] E.g., V. H. Jackson, "Notes on the Barabar Hills", *Patna College Magazine* (March 1913, p. 97).

[8] The novelist, Marmaduke Pickthall, who was a convert to Islam as well as a defender of Indian nationalism during his editorship of a Bombay newspaper, "constantly had to deny that he was the schoolmaster in Mr E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India*" (Anne Fremantle, *Loyal Enemy*, London: Hutchinson, 1938, p. 441). Forster's friend, Malcolm Darling, who was an Indian Civil Service official dedicated to the Indian co-operative movement, has been proposed again recently as having been a "model" for Fielding. So has B. G. Horniman, who in his journalism supported Indian nationalism, and so has Leonard Woolf, who had worked in the Ceylon Civil Service and later encouraged Forster to finish this novel.

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of Patna College and chairman at the Charles Russell Memorial Lecture there, recalled to his students that Russell was "an inspiring leader ... the founder of the corporate life of our College." The India Office Records indicate that by the beginning of 1913, Russell, who had just turned forty, was about to become principal of the College. He was still a bachelor, who would two years later get married. His wife's photographs of him show that he was athletic in build and manly in expression, but she recollects that, apart from the sport, "he was not keen on the local Club."[9] Moreover, the *Times Educational Supplement* obituarist wrote, after Russell's death during his Gurkha regiment's advance on Jerusalem in 1917, that he had "too individual" a mind to submit "to the trammels of officialdom."

It might be tempting, considering that these selected details of Russell's appearance, belief and attitude appear in the characterisation of Fielding, to assume that Russell vanished from history, only to reappear in *A Passage to India* ... if Forster had not known a few other Anglo-Indians of Russell's type, if Russell's Georgian verse did not indicate a personality both more and less than Fielding reveals, and if an artist's creation of any major character who lives within a novel did not finally seem a mystery.

FORSTER'S MINOR Anglo-Indian characters, however, have attracted most controversy about the kinds of connections that might exist between this novel and life. Ronny Heaslop—Adela's would-be lover in the finished novel—was nearly singled out by Forster for special justification just after the novel appeared. Professor E. A. Horne of Patna College had written a letter to the *New Statesman*, arguing that the Anglo-India shown in the novel was "wildly improbable and unreal." Forster first drafted a reply in which he argued that his Anglo-Indian characters were drawn directly from experiences such as this one:

> "A friend of mine—not then a collector though he afterwards became one—told me when I was stopping with him, that I might ask an Indian friend (who lived in the same town) to lunch.... But when the Indian came, he never spoke to him."

In an entry in his diary for 2 February 1913, just

[9] Lilla Russell (Mrs Charles Russell), who kindly gave me access to her family papers and to Miss Shahazad Masood's correspondence with Forster about his "model" for Fielding, also indicated the circle of personal relationships that brought Masood, Forster, and Charles Russell together: Sir Theodore Morison, who was Masood's guardian and Forster's neighbour at Weybridge, was also the godfather to Russell's daughter.

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after he had gone north from the Patna area to Allahabad, Forster recorded:

> "R. B. S. typical civilian. Protects ryots [peasants] but hates any class that can criticize him. Invited Ahmed Mirza to lunch, but could not talk to him.... Is curt and insolent to the pleaders [lawyers] in his court."

"R. B. S." was Forster's friend, Rupert Barkeley Smith, who, P. N. Furbank has stated in his *Life*, reacted to *A Passage to India* by breaking off the friendship for some 30 years.

Forster's anecdote about Barkeley Smith appears at first glance to be paralleled in the novel by Heaslop's behaviour, especially towards Indian pleaders in his court. In the amended letter that Forster actually sent Horne in 1924, however, he deleted such anecdotes as well as the accompanying line of argument that his novel was a mirror of Anglo-India. Barkeley Smith's own unpublished "Memoirs", which he wrote in 1922, imply that he might a few times have overplayed the stock Anglo-Indian role of protecting the peasantry against educated Indians. He nevertheless showed an interest in and affection for various Indians at events such as the Hindu bathing fairs which he supervised. Moreover, like Aziz in Forster's novel, he also enthused over the Mogul tradition of Islamic culture, "They were great fighters, great lovers, great hunters." So, as Forster comments in *Aspects of the Novel* about the difficulty of ascertaining the relations between the world in *Emma* and life itself, it is hard to detect the shifting connections between Forster's novel and his experiences of India.

WHAT FORSTER OBSERVED in India, and how those he met there affected his observations, as in the case of his friend Barkeley Smith, may partly be questions of the kind of *literariness* attached to life there. This can be seen from the Anglo-Indian novelist, Edmund Candler, whom Forster stayed with in the princely state of Patiala in March 1913. Candler recalled in 1924 that when he went to India at the turn of the century he had felt "drawn on to the stage" to join the characters from contemporary Anglo-Indian literature such as Kipling's.[10] In 1919 this Anglo-Indian "stage" collapsed under the Amritsar Massacre in the Punjab. Candler realised bitterly that this was so when two years later he left India after failing, as public relations officer for the government of the Punjab, to defend the Raj there against criticisms from both Gandhi's Non-Cooperation and the Moslems' Khilafat movements. As an educationalist, Candler had spent much of his life trying to inculcate Anglo-Indian notions of manliness into Indian youths—especially on the cricket ground. He had also practised such a role himself. As a war correspondent who had volunteered to cover Younghusband's expedition against Tibet in 1904, he got caught in a mêlée: the Tibetans hacked at his head with their long-swords until he fell, wounded in nine places, his left hand having been severed so that it required immediate amputation. Within a few hours he rode out, one-handed, trembling with pain, to catch up to the rearguard of the advance.

During his stay with Candler in 1913, Forster played up to his host's dramatisation of manliness, though he had evidently scorned several other Anglo-Indians' pretensions of that kind. Perhaps he was attracted to Candler's unusual love of art, perhaps by the even more unusual fact for Anglo-India that Candler did not stereotype him as either a "Pagett, M.P." or a "poor creature."[11] Forster recorded that he "left a part" of himself when Candler had him gallop out on horseback to chase herds of black buck and wild boar. Yet he also noted—in the consistent way that he collected illustrations of many Anglo-Indians' racialism and other faults—that Candler said he had been momentarily tempted to knock down a "greasy" Indian professor who had dwelt upon the "exquisite" beauty of Shakespeare's Rosalind. At the end of his stay with Candler, Forster wrote in his diary, "He is impressed by me but would soon find me out." Had Candler, however, been found out?

Forster sent a copy of *A Passage to India* to Candler in 1924 when it came out, and Candler duly praised it, comparing Forster's vision of India to his own. Forster replied:

> "I must ... indicate the gulf between us! ... you are in the Club trying to be fair to the poor Indians, and I am with the Indians trying to be fair to the poor Club.... we arrive at an external similarity, but that's all ... God preserve us from cricket in Heaven!"

CANDLER'S NOVEL, *Siri Ram, Revolutionist: A Transcript from Life, 1907–1910*, was published a few months before Forster visited him at Patiala in 1913. In literary technique, and in its ironic treatment of revolutionary politics, this novel often resembles *The Secret Agent*—in fact, Conrad, who had known Candler since 1899, wrote that he reread *Siri Ram* in 1919, "marvelling and musing

[10] Edmund Candler, *Youth and the East* (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1924), p. 27. Joseph Conrad's friendly letters to Candler appear in Henry Candler's "Memoir" in the 1932 edition of this work.

[11] Forster himself expected to attract this first label, deriving from Kipling's caricature of an opinionated and silly visitor to India; the second epithet was applied to Forster in a confidential correspondence among I.C.S. officials in 1916 (India Office Library).

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over the pages. It was a great experience." But how does its expression of Candler's outlook towards India reflect on the way Forster said he had been "fair" to "the Club" (Anglo-India)?

Siri Ram is the imaginary life of an assassin—a student convert to the anarchism, nationalistic but quasi-Hindu, which, historically, had resulted in outrages against officials of the Raj during the first decade of this century, mainly in Bengal but also occasionally in regions such as the Punjab where this novel is set. Candler himself, before he left Bengal for the Punjab where Forster visited him, had been marked down for assassination. Or at least he thought so. This must have sharpened his wit for creating detail such as this revolutionary Swami's oratory: "the wildest dreams of modern Science were known to the Rishis. . . . the origin of sex, the magnetism of the earth. . . . There is no babble in the Vedas. Believe me, it is wrong to lie east and west." Siri Ram is consequently converted, "I am going into the lap of her who is the mother of three hundred millions of men." His friend accidentally conveys another view of this patriotism for Mother India, "Siri Ram has taken the bitch between his teeth." After this novel came out, members of the Indian nationalist reform society, the Arya Samaj, which Candler's characters are said to belong to, tried to sue the author for libelling them. Is this what Forster is facetiously referring to when he explained that he had tried to be "fair" to "poor" Anglo-India as Candler had tried "to be fair to the poor Indians"?

The concealed sting in Forster's letter to Candler is also apparent from Candler's overall story in *Siri Ram* which, like Forster's novel, evolves towards a central episode in a cave, where Siri Ram feels he has become nerved for the revolution to expel the British:

> "The cave compelled wonder. The brow of the rock, its roof, could only have been conceived by a god for his dwelling-place. The solid shafts supporting it were built for eternity. Such a vault must shroud the Primal Cause, the green mysterious ice lingam in which all energy and force reside. Even Siri Ram, the rationalist fed on text-books and annotations, could have believed as he approached to scatter his flowers on the ice, that the cave was no mere haphazard design of the changing strata of the earth, but a mansion built by hands at the nod of Shiv."

We sense sympathy here, however, as well as an exposé of Siri Ram's repressed erotomania when he enters Amarnath Cave in Kashmir—"Siva's Mansion"—to identify himself with the power

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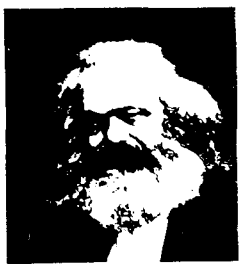

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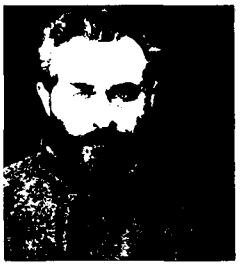

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represented by the ice-carved phallus of the god. But when we turn in this novel to contemplate Candler's Anglo-Indian Inspector Heats—District Magistrate Merivale, policeman Dean, Dr Chauncey and the other officials—we find only the stock figures of Anglo-Indian light fiction, enacting a pageant of courage, duty and sacrifice: "they did more honest work in a day than a regiment of propagandists." For them, as for the policeman hero in his story, "Probationary" (1911), the game is to drain the "black ooze of undredged wickedness" in India. Forster's letter that contrasts Candler's writing to his own novel, *A Passage to India*, seems therefore to disclose a development in his imagination: his connecting his experiences in and study of India with popular fiction about India that seemed both to derive from and to contribute to the literariness of life there.

THREE MONTHS BEFORE he visited Candler, Forster had made a trip to Simla in order to stay with another novelist, Sara Jeannette Duncan (Mrs Everard Cotes). He wrote to his mother that she was "clever and odd—nice to talk to alone, but at times the Social Manner descended like a pall." In her *Simple Adventures of a Memsahib* (1893)—which Forster referred to—her cleverness and oddity emerge in the comedy of a heroine "being shipped" out to India, not to evangelise "the heathen", but to try to convert "*one* heathen", an Anglo-Indian, into a husband. This novel, however, also becomes a stock illustration of how a woman becomes a Memsahib who keeps Indians in their place and fosters her husband's pretensions about his position in India. Yet Sara Duncan, in this as well as in her later novel, *Set in Authority* (1906), sometimes writes as if she were trying to mimic and expose the "Social Manner" that resulted from her community's dream of India:

> "Pilaghur is the capital. . . . Down beneath the bare feet of the chuprassie [government messenger] and the police we may see dimly the Province of Ghoom. Reflecting, we must call Pilaghur two capitals. There is the Pilaghur which the ladies of the station think of . . . a queer, quiet, theatrical look . . . The other Pilaghur crowds upon the skirts of this . . . Out there the multitudinous mud huts are like an eruption of the baked and liver-coloured earth."

Anglo-India's late Victorian tradition of comic sketch-writing is reflected here, but there is also much that seems uncannily related to the opening of *A Passage to India*. One's feeling of *déjà vu* is increased by reading her next novel, *The Burnt Offering* (1909), in which a young spinster, Joan Mills, and her father, Vulcan, a socialist MP, have come out to Bengal to discover the "real Calcutta" among the Bengali revolutionaries and revivalists of around 1905. Again, Sara Duncan is often witty about Indian crime and interracial sex as well as about less obsessive matters. Yet she is like a mediaeval jester in a threatened court, mimicking and exposing the outsiders' worlds—the Indian nationalists' and their English supporters'—while protecting herself by sugaring, with re-enactments of Anglo-India's stock dreams, the aspects of her fiction that touched upon the life of her own community.

DURING THE FIRST THREE DECADES of this century, most of the Anglo-Indian writers such as Maud Diver, Alice Perrin, and Mrs Penny, as well as their metropolitan imitators like Ethel M. Dell, wrote their "love-stories" and "thrillers" to well-established formulae. Apart from entertaining a large audience—for instance, Ethel M. Dell's tales, *The Lamp in the Desert* (1919) and *Way of an Eagle* (1912), attracted upwards of one million buyers—this fiction continued to mythologise Anglo-Indian mating rituals and social beliefs that had already become calcified and ready to disintegrate by 1920. As Forster had observed in 1915, many of these stories warned more or less cynically against "the sultry, ugly breath of Oriental passion."[12] Many more of these stories celebrated wish-fulfilment reveries about a young woman's passage to India in pursuit of love and marriage, usually to an officer of the Indian Civil Service or Army:

> ". . . at last he [Lance] was kissing her [Eve] with a man's fervour, with a boy's worship. It seemed to draw the heart out of her body . . . and in deeper depths, the very springs of life welling up in her."

Poor Adela Quested! Poor Ronny Heaslop!

During the twelve or so years up to 1924, Forster also noticed a vogue developing, not for Tagore and similarly demanding authors of the Indian renaissance, but for metropolitan dispensers of "Oriental" uplift. In Fielding Hall's novel, *Love's Legend* (1914), the hero leads his lover, Lesbia, "up the winding jungle path" to begin the schooling of her spirit through a raft-journey down the Brahmaputra. Tagore is called upon, so is Hafiz, both devalued by Hall's unerring sense of banality. Forster observed of this that Fielding Hall was "neo-Oriental. . . . Were he cynical, he might

[12] I. A. R. Wylie's *The Daughter of Brahma* and, following this, Maud Diver's *A Wild Bird* illustrate respectively the minus and plus of "Indian love." In a letter to Masood in early 1911, Forster mentioned that, having just enjoyed one of Alice Perrin's novels in this vogue, he attempted a second story of hers: "most tiresome."

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be void of offence, but he writes in the name of high feeling and theosophy, and marital love, which makes him very hard to bear." Forster added that Hall, in professing "to feel", has merely "tossed sanctities about like parcels, without trying to apprehend the contents. Love is not a word of four letters, nor God a word of three. Both occur on many a page . . . yet are further than ever from us at the close."

Forster respected converts such as Margaret E. Noble (Sister Nivedita of the Ramakrishna Order) who tried to illustrate to readers how India or the East is "One, and shall give light." But he mocked the exploitation of this by authors such as Fielding Hall and Robert Hichens, "the Voice from the Minaret and the Voice from the Box Office blend into one."[13] In such literature it did not matter much whether the spirituality being imported to save the Western soul was supposed to be Hinduism, Buddhism, some Sufist branch of Islam, some syncretic doctrine like Theosophy, or curried platitudes.

[13] These comments of Forster's about the contemporary "Indian boom" in popular literature appear in his three reviews: "To Simply Feel", *New Weekly* (8 August 1914, p. 245); "The Mission of Hinduism", *Daily News & Leader* (30 April 1915, p. 7); "Drama: Grip", *Athenaeum* (5 September 1919, p. 852).

THE CONNECTION OF the foregoing with the creation of *A Passage to India* seems implicit in the way Forster was also then working on superficially similar material for "The Life to Come" (1922). In this short story, a missionary, Pinmay, converts a chieftain, Vithobai. A bleak joke centres on the irregularity of the chief's conversion, which Forster narrates by exaggerating the conventional expression from a type of sub-Conradian prose often associated then with tropical Africa and the South Seas: "Love had been born . . . Trivial or immortal it had been born to two human bodies as a midnight cry. . . . A remote, a romantic spot . . . lovely, lovable." The missionary capitalises on the chief's unrequited love for him in order to "put down" dancing and "secret immorality" as well as to introduce his brother-in-law's mining concession. The people are soon denatured, but the chief avenges himself by knifing Pinmay: "Mounting on the corpse, he climbed higher . . . naked, victorious, leaving all disease and humiliation behind him, and he swooped like a falcon from the parapet in pursuit of the terrified shade." The "shade" of a sexist, colonialist exploiter, no doubt, but from where in 1922 could this caricature have originated?

Evelyn Waugh, who was later to transmute his travels through the actualities and dreamscapes of East Africa and British Guiana into *Black*

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Mischief, Scoop, and *A Handful of Dust*, has noted that "the spirit of adventure often results in literary trash. . . . The larger one's humour and sensitiveness, the more readily does one's life slip into a habit of parody."[14] In "The Life to Come", did Forster harness or did he succumb to "a habit of parody" when he sent up the style, heroes and story-line from novels and Sunday School serials by missionaries such as the Reverend Arthur E. Southon? In much of their characteristic fiction, a missionary hero, assisted by a "native aristocrat" whom he had converted through Christ's love, proceeded to defeat evil and bring enlightenment by methods sometimes resembling those applied by their contemporaries, Sanders of the River and Bosambo. Nevertheless, one can hardly help but feel that Forster's parody of this formula looks somewhat camped-up.

"THE LIFE TO COME" seems to relate to *A Passage to India* much as Jane Austen's earliest burlesques of sentimental romances and moralising tales anticipate *Emma*, in which the stock reveries of romances and the predictable values of moralising tales are contrasted with and displaced by experience. In early 1924 Forster wrote about R. W. Chapman's edition of Austen, "She is my favourite author!" He went on to indicate that her novels had been "freshened and enriched by contact with the life of facts" such as Chapman's annotations about types of period novels which she parodied by alluding to, abridging, inverting, exaggerating or understating with incongruity their details of plot, character and expression. This suggests how Forster's creation of his last novel seemed to emerge from the intersection of the drama of his own experiences in India with the dreams of the Indias that were apparent in the three main genres of popular fiction then relating to the Subcontinent.

He began "Mosque", the first part of his novel, with the scenery of Chandrapore close up, which is "scarcely distinguishable from the rubbish." The place looks romantic, however, if one attains a sufficient distance and height from it, "It is no city.... It is a tropical pleasance, washed by a noble river." Somewhere out of sight in the reality of the border between these long and short views is Aziz's group of Moslem Indians, having a meal and complaining about the shortcomings of Anglo-Indians. To this bifocalised city, as in a romance by Maud Diver, or better still, by Forster's acquaintance, Sara Jeannette Duncan, his Miss Quested has come, seeking "the *real* India" and love. For addictive readers of contemporary Anglo-Indian fiction, her surname, redolent of the heroines of ritual and mythology—until you add the "Miss"—alongside those of Mrs Moore and Heaslop, must have provoked either laughter or indignation at the author's mockery of the dream-roles of the virgin fresh from England, her chaperone, and her potential Anglo-Indian lover. And the picture of the Anglo-Indian society that is to support such sentimentality seems even more of a parodic inversion of what would have been expected. The collector, Turton, thus directs Miss Quested towards her prospective lover's suitability: "Heaslop's a sahib", not only because he is not much good at the "lingo" or "the Law", but also, it seems, because he has enough inhibitions to freeze the passion of any woman in quest of a "*real* India."

Miss Quested's longing, however, seems about to be answered in "Part II: Caves" by Dr Aziz's "expedition" to the Marabar Caves, so that beneath the realism and symbolism a parodic love-story evolves into a parodic thriller. For instance, at the end of this "expedition", there seems to be nothing in the caves, not even the "pestilence or treasure" or phallus that exotic fiction from Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* (1885) to Edmund Candler's "A Break in the Rains" (1911) and *Siri Ram* (1912) should have led one to expect in a vault or cavern. Here there only seems to be an echo of the state of mind of each of the more

[14] Evelyn Waugh, "Mr Fleming in Brazil", *Spectator* (11 August 1933, p. 195).

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susceptible visitors, so that Mrs Moore is demoralised and Miss Quested imagines.... It is difficult to say what, because not even Forster is willing to explain.

Whatever sets off her hallucinations and subsequent accusation that Aziz had tried to fondle her in the cave, her condition soon agitates the Anglo-Indian community into trying to make Aziz and his friend, Fielding, seem like stock villains—the one a personification of erotomania and sedition, the other a figure of disloyalty and weakness—from the many Anglo-Indian crime-stories concerning either the "great anarchy" in Bengal and elsewhere around 1905 or Gandhi's Non-Cooperation and the Moslems' Khilafat movements after 1919–1920. Forster makes the incongruities of his officials' behaviour mock their claims to the heroism that many authors, even Candler, had automatically given the Anglo-Indian characters with whom they identified themselves and their readers. Forster, in creating Miss Quested's Marabar experience and the trial of Aziz, subverted the values of melodrama by mimicking its tricks.

IN THE 1950s Forster commented that he had named *A Passage to India* after Walt Whitman's poem (1872) of that title, because his novel "is—or rather desires to be—philosophic and poetic." In the third section, "Temple", through sequences such as the description of Godbole's dance of cosmic unity, the attainment of this desire is qualified by strains of realism and parody that derive from Forster's equivocal experiences at the 1921 Krishna festival in Dewas Senior (recorded in *The Hill of Devi*) and from his awareness of the attenuated successors to Whitman's poem. About Whitman himself, Forster had noted in his Indian Diary (1912), "Walt Whitman sincere but so stupid." Forster's narrator in "Temple", like some retiring animal whose protective coloration has blended him into his surroundings, still scrutinises what is passing; for instance, he notes that the Sweepers' Band of untouchables, "the Despised and Rejected", are invited to celebrate God's birth because they are the "spot of filth" which the spirit needs in order to "cohere." Such irony mocks the rationalisations of popular "orientalising" literature, but it also seems to validate his lyricism concerning the rebirth of a frolicsome but divine love which many ordinary people have experienced even if Aziz and Fielding cannot do so. By contrast, in the earlier parts of the novel, Forster's parody of Anglo-Indian love-stories and thrillers sharpens his comic realism about personal behaviour into a satire of life in a Raj which—perhaps like life today—often appears to have got muddled with popular entertainment.

In *A Passage to India*, Forster fused parody with both realism and lyricism, reconstituting and revealing his own experiences with Indians, Anglo-Indians and the Subcontinent as well as with popular English entertainment about India. He freed his novel from those origins by assimilating them into his main characters' attempts "to connect" with one another or with "the unseen." In 1923, when Forster was finishing this masterpiece for publication, he wrote to Masood:

> "Art seems the only true vent for our sorrows and for the dissatisfactions that are somehow more painful even than our sorrows. It alone redresses the bias against romance that runs through the material of the world. Personal relations succeed in this way less and less.... I wonder whether anything should be added to the dedication ('To Syed Ross Masood')."

Historians & Others

On the Sense of History—By MAX BELOFF

THE SYNDICS of the Cambridge University Press are not a superstitious body of men, or they would presumably not have commissioned a thirteenth volume for the New Cambridge Modern History.[1] Alas, in this case, superstition would seem to be justified. If not a disaster this "Companion Volume", as it is styled, is nevertheless very far from being a total success. Its objects are imprecise, its execution uneven, and some chapters fall far below what might be expected from so distinguished a series as the Cambridge histories. I do not, I hasten to add, blame the editor, Peter Burke. No one who has not had the experience of editing a collective history can be fully aware of the disappointments and frustrations inherent in the task. One fails to get the contributors one wants, promised chapters never arrive, one's actual assignments are ignored. Mr Burke himself is an accomplished and original scholar, and he must be as aware as any reviewer of the book's weak spots.

[1] *The New Cambridge Modern History: XIII: Companion Volume.* Edited by PETER BURKE. Cambridge University Press, £12.50.

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The work is intended to fulfil three functions. The first is straightforward, to provide chapters that sum up some aspect of history (primarily Western history) for the whole five centuries covered in the preceding twelve volumes where these particular aspects are more likely to be dealt with in the course of handling more limited periods and more specific problems. The task is less simple than it sounds since it demands not only a wide range of historical learning but some capacity for clear and pertinent generalisation. Geoffrey Parker's chapter on Warfare is a good example of what can be done, since it illuminates for the reader the different wars and types of warfare that play so important a role in the particular histories recounted in earlier volumes. G. E. Aylmer is rather less happy in dealing with his own pet theme, "Bureaucracy", perhaps because the change of scale brought about in the last century is difficult to handle by use of the categories developed to deal with the 17th century where Mr Aylmer's primary interests lie. The chapters on Population by the French historian Jacques Dupaquier and on the Environment and the Economy by the Australian Eric Jones are full of matter; and if the American William Parker's chapter on Industry does not read as flowingly as Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie's chapter on Peasants, it has the merit of covering a much wider field.

History is not only concerned with material things; the intellectual history of the modern period also demands continuous treatment. In fact, it gets attention in three chapters only. Mr Burke's own on "Religion and Secularisation" is a model of how to tackle a difficult subject of this kind and how to avoid the pitfalls inherent in the ambiguity of many of the most familiar of the concepts that must be used. Peter M. Heimann deals with "scientific revolutions" in a more limited way, concentrating on disputing the familiar contention that the "revolution in scientific thought" in the 17th century provides the intellectual categories for dealing with all later developments. But to concentrate in this way so heavily on mathematics and the physical sciences is to underplay the importance of the "revolutions" in the life-sciences which have been historically no less important. Even more central in a companion volume to a great history should have been a treatment of the social sciences, including history itself, as the instruments through which men have tried both to interpret and to change their condition. Unfortunately the one chapter in which one might have hoped to find this theme treated, the chapter on "social thought and social science" by R. W. Outhwaite, comes nowhere near meeting this requirement. It is simply an attempt to give an account of modern sociology from a more or less Marxist viewpoint, and at about the level of a not very distinguished undergraduate essay. One has the feeling that Mr Burke, having failed to get a scholar or scholars capable of treating the whole subject simply, looked round the University of Sussex campus to find some junior colleague who could be persuaded to fill the gap.

THE OTHER TWO THEMES which the volume attempts to tackle are the perennial one of periodisation—what does one mean by *modern* history—and the problem of continuity and change (the subject of Mr Burke's own introductory chapter). Unfortunately Mr Burke has been more skilful in setting out the problem than his contributors in dealing with it—though the historians of population and the economy do help to give one some indication of the long-term cycles that underlie the immediate issues more visible to contemporaries. In a volume which covers the English, American, the French, the Russian and the Nazi Revolutions it would be reasonable to expect a problem of continuity and discontinuity to be discussed in relation to the theme of "Revolution"; and a chapter on this subject duly appears. But its author, Victor Kiernan, is too inhibited by Marxist categories and too concerned to defend the Marxist analysis of the phenomenon of revolution itself to be able to dominate his material, and the basic question remains unanswered. What difference did the Revolutions make? Professor Kiernan leaves us uncertain.

Professor Kiernan is of course a scholar who has done distinguished work in his own field, and nothing he has to say can be wholly without interest or wholly unenlightening. On the other hand, the chapter with which Mr Burke has chosen to end this volume is so bizarre and so out of place that one remains baffled at its inclusion. The title itself—"On the Last 2,300 Years in Western History and Some Remarks on the Coming 500"— should itself have been a warning that we were in for the higher nonsense. Even if well done, the most such a chapter could contribute to the purpose of the companion would be to clarify the notion of periodisation. But it is not well done—the authors are not historians at all but hold chairs (or a chair—it is not quite clear) of "Conflict and Peace Research" in the University of Oslo. What they are concerned to do is to follow Arnold Toynbee in decrying the achievements of Western civilisation as a whole in favour of some allegedly higher things to be learned from non-Western civilisations: from the Ayatollah Khomeini, General Zia, Pol Pot?—it is not quite clear. However, they go beyond Toynbee in attaching importance to alternative social cosmologies within Western society itself—the usual mishmash of drop-outs, occultists, ecologists, Californian communes, and so forth—from whom the West will derive salvation by a return to the non-aggressive,

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non-competitive, inward-directed society which they perceive as having had its last avatar in the Middle Ages. Perhaps only comfortable and well-fed Scandinavians would show such contempt for the hardships of the masses of people all over the world who would gladly exchange their privileged spiritual status for the abundant foods, hygiene, and freedom from arbitrary tyranny, which with all the setbacks (and not forgetting the Nazis) have after all been the goal—and still are, in large measure, the achievement—of the West these writers so despise.

It is depressing to think that this kind of loose thinking should find a home in a volume sponsored by Cambridge; it drove me back for consolation to the progenitor of all the Cambridge histories, the great Lord Acton himself, who in his inaugural lecture in 1895 gave a still valid answer to the question of what we mean by modern times:

> "After many ages persuaded of the headlong decline and impending dissolution of society, and governed by usage and the will of masters who were in their graves, the sixteenth century went forth armed for untried experience, and ready to watch with hopefulness a prospect of incalculable change."

Are we to exchange that hopefulness for the dismal perspectives of Professors Galtung, Rudeng and Heiestad?

NONE OF THIS MEANS, of course, that the new historiography emphasising long-term trends and basic social structures has not come to stay, or that a contemporary historian seeking to give a series of lectures on modern history as a whole would not lay his emphasis very differently from Lord Acton's. How wide his range would have to be we can learn from the collected essays of Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie himself.[2] To study the basic foundations and to understand the ebbs and flows in human affairs, the new historian requires a training that will enable him freely to cooperate with other workers both in the social sciences and in the natural sciences. Climate, for instance, can no longer be seen as a constant factor even over as brief a period (from the geologists' point of view) as the last two millennia. Climate and slowly-changing technology, reflected in productivity and prices, affect demographical patterns; diseases, endemic and epidemic, must be given their proper place; demographical changes affect social attitudes and are, in turn, affected by them. The ability to compile and compare statistical evidence is central to studies of this kind.

But Le Roy Ladurie remains an historian, not a

[2] *The Territory of the Historian*. By E. LE ROY LADURIE. Translated by BEN and SIAN REYNOLDS. Harvester Press, £12.50.

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social scientist. He is well aware of the fact that what we are dealing with are concrete events and a past which is there to be understood, perhaps to be reconstituted (as in his own now famous *Montaillou*) and not to be played about with. He is, therefore, highly sceptical when it comes to some American versions of the new cliometrics, particularly the use made of counter-factual propositions. Such intellectual exercises may be suggestive; they cannot be conclusive. If the railway had not been invented—well, well. If, as Pascal said, Cleopatra's nose had been shorter.... Equally, Le Roy Ladurie does not attempt to look into the future; the past gives us matter enough. Furthermore, the need to be trained in new skills does not mean that the historian can do without his traditional ones. Knowing about tree-rings does not dispense him from knowing how to use archives and to read ancient records. Indeed some records that have been looked at for one purpose may require going through again for quite different ones. Masses of documents in Western Europe remain to be sifted and exploited.

What strikes one most about these essays is not, however, simply the width of Le Roy Ladurie's interests—prices, demography, social life, folklore, urbanisation, crime—but the enthusiasm he brings to expounding both his own discoveries and those of others: British, American, and German scholars, but above all his own compatriots. He successfully conveys the feeling that in France, at least, there has been a real renaissance of the historian's craft. The research itself (even when aided by computers) must often be tedious and is always and necessarily long-drawn out; but the results in reshaping our knowledge of the past and our ability to see it in proper perspective have been enormously enhanced. It reminds one of the sense of infinite possibilities that pervades the writings of scholars working in the 19th-century springtime of professional history in Germany, in England and in America. Today France is in the lead and we can all be her beneficiaries.[3]

MEANWHILE IT SHOULD NOT BE IMAGINED that there are no new ideas among historians elsewhere. Professor Michael Kammen has managed to give a new and exciting twist to a subject that has often been explored—the impact of the American Revolution upon the subsequent development of the United States' self-image and upon the way in which that country has dealt with its national problems.[4] How did the libertarian elements dominant in the original ideology come to be confounded with the right to material prosperity widely distributed which has been the major driving force through most of American history? How have Americans who have, on the whole and for most of the time, been profoundly unrevolutionary in their politics been able to accept as national heroes a band of men, who had they lost, would have suffered the death of traitors (as they well knew)? How have the Daughters of the American Revolution come to typify the American brand of conservatism?

The originality of Professor Kammen's handling of his theme lies in the use of materials that previous historians have largely neglected. What professional historians have made of the Revolution is well known and the debate among them is by no means over. But here is a study of what can be derived from less formal materials—from iconography, from poetry, from fiction, from drama and, latterly, from the cinema. Kammen shows how in a country with only a brief history the popular craving for myth can still be satisfied, indeed must be; and so this work links on to the explorations of the very distant European peasant mind by Le Roy Ladurie. What I think is missing is perhaps some sense of irony. After all, when General George Washington fought, the ancestors of most Americans were not in America at all but in European towns and villages from Ireland to the Ukraine, from Portugal to the Levant; they were in East European ghettos or African jungles; and yet what unites them is the constitution and the improvised flag of a group of dissident English gentlemen. On the whole, despite the fact that this is a very thorough study on its own terms, this question is not something that Professor Kammen altogether faces. A pity.

RAYMOND ARON would not claim to be an historian but rather a philosopher or a sociologist; yet his new volume of essays (admirably selected, translated and edited by Miriam Bernheim Conant) is quite correctly entitled *Politics and History*.[5] For over his whole career and most especially in the last two decades from which this selection is drawn, Aron has seen it as his intellectual task to recall the "pure" theorist, whether in sociology, political science, international relations or strategic studies, to the limitations of all theory that does not take account of the contingent in human affairs, of the political event deriving from an act of choice that cannot be ignored if we

[3] Since I am myself a contributor to it I should not review but may be permitted to call attention to another volume showing the span of interests of the French historical school: *Culture, Science et Développement: contribution à une histoire de l'homme: Mélanges en l'honneur de Charles Morazé* (Privat, Toulouse, 1979).

[4] *A Season of Youth*. By MICHAEL KAMMEN. Knopf, $15.

[5] *Politics and History*. By RAYMOND ARON. Collier Macmillan, £11.95.

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are to grasp the reality of human experience. And for this understanding we need to meditate on history and historians. Aron does not suffer from the shallowness that characterises much contemporary social science and which can, in its pretentiousness and intellectual intolerance, provoke him to sudden flashes of impatience.

> Some specialists on international relations nourish the ambition of building a science on the same model as the natural sciences. They have poured anger and scorn on the "traditionalists", the "historians" and the "literary types": their stake is not mere truth but rather the distribution of academic posts. . . .

On the other hand, Aron knows too that the historical approach can also be a superficial one unless informed by some commitment as to the nature of historical knowledge and an understanding of the technical task of the historian. His essay "Thucydides and the Historical Narrative" is an intellectual delight.

But Aron has not been only a man of the study; he has confronted the question that many sociologists have shirked, whether one can be content with refining one's own perceptions and adding to one's own store of knowledge without oneself playing a part in the public arena. The question is the more relevant to Aron himself, because in sociology his own sympathies lie with Marx and Max Weber, for whom political issues were central, and not with Durkheim and his school, for whom "society" could be treated as an abstraction in relation to which questions of "who rules and for what purpose" are largely irrelevant. The question of the intellectual's duty has haunted Raymond Aron since his days as a graduate student in Berlin, as Weimar gave way to Hitler. As he tells us in some revealing autobiographical passages:

> Between the sociology of Max Weber—a sociology of the war among classes, parties, and gods—and the living experience of a doctor of philosophy, a Frenchman, and a Jew, living in Berlin during the first months of the Third Reich, there existed, it seemed to me, a sort of pre-established harmony, or in more modest terms, an accord of sensibilities. . . .

Few men in their mid-seventies can look back on a career at once so constructive and so consistent.

> I found my way at about twenty-six when I chose the theme of my philosophic thought; the relations between action and history, and it is out of this inquiry into the relations between action and history, that all my books have emerged.

In the 1930s Aron was appalled by the historical blindness that affected Western statesmen when confronted with the phenomenon of Nazism. Since 1945, he has been warning his own countrymen

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and the Western world in general against the threat posed by what the Russians have made of Marxism, a subject he is the better able to discuss because Marx has played so important a part in his own intellectual development:

> Since 1945 I have not ceased to plead rationally against communism, for the industrialisation of a France retarded in its development by the calamities of the century, for the Atlantic Alliance, and for resistance to Soviet expansion in order to save both peace and freedom.

When one listens to Western officials expressing their confidence in the prospects of *détente* (since "in the last resort" what matters to the Russians is simply their own national self-interest), it is useful to look back at what Aron wrote as long ago as 1967:

> To say that the Soviet Union conducts foreign affairs on the basis of its "national interest" means that it is not guided exclusively by ideological considerations, by its ambition to spread communism. Such a proposition is undeniable, but to conclude from it that the rulers of a non-communist Russia would have had the same diplomatic policy between 1917 and 1967 is simply absurd.

To know the history is one thing, to have a sense of history is another.

FINALLY, should Peter Burke have looked for an historian to discuss the development of historiography in his "Companion", he need hardly have looked further than to J. H. Hexter of Yale, who has just published a collection of his more recent writings on the subject.[6] He is, of course, best known for his trenchant application of the rules of evidence to historical generalisations, and the volume duly contains his famous demolition job on Christopher Hill that first appeared in the pages of the *Times Literary Supplement*. Nevertheless, he is equally adept at seizing on what is important in an historical work and not being diverted from the task of analysing this aspect of it by the congenial task of pointing to errors and omissions. His essay on Lawrence Stone's *The Crisis of the Aristocracy* exhibits this aspect of his writing at its best. Nor has Professor Hexter limited himself to the period of the early Stuarts (which he modestly claims to be the only one of which he can speak with authority). His essay on J. G. A. Pocock's *The Machiavellian Moment* is proof enough of his ability to range far and wide through the centuries dealt with in the Cambridge Modern History.

But Professor Hexter's breadth as an historiographer is best shown in the essay on "Fernand Braudel and the Monde Braudellian." He shows here a capacity for entering into the mind of another and very different historian—to relate his work to a whole epoch in the intellectual history of his country, and to draw some lessons of value for his own countrymen. Why have the French succeeded and the Americans failed to build valuable bridges between history and the other social sciences? And how far can the aridity of US political science be attributed to its deliberate lack of an historical dimension? It is important that statistics should be used and understood but not abused in pursuit of the trivial.

Yet Professor Hexter is by no means a total devotee of the *Annales* school. He retains his affection for those historians concerned with problems rather than with infinite combinations of fact and speculation—and "elegance", even if not always the hallmark of his own writing, remains a key work in his vocabulary of praise.

[6] *Historians*. By J. H. HEXTER. Collins, £6.95.

The Berlin Test-Case

Long Shadows of Blockades & Walls—By ALUN CHALFONT

IT MAY SEEM perverse and even obscure to suggest an association between the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin and the north door of St Paul's Cathedral. The key is that classic, if now somewhat hackneyed, tribute to Sir Christopher Wren—*si monumentum requiris, circumspice*. For the City of Berlin too is a monument—a monument not only to a betrayal but also to the persistent triumph in human affairs of hope over bitter experience. To look around divided Berlin is to experience an assault upon the senses by all the outward symbols of fear, suspicion, and oppression—the hard-faced sentries at the check-points with their soldiers' uniforms and policemen's eyes; the buildings overlooking the wall with their windows either bricked up or left blank and curtainless to accommodate the hidden cameras and directional microphones; and, of course, *die Mauer*, the Wall itself, a crude and brutal construction, a reflection in aesthetic terms of the moral squalor of Marxism-Leninism.

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These are the trappings and symbols of an artificially divided city of which one part resolutely persists in preserving its integrity many miles from the Western heartland of its political, spiritual and cultural affinities.

Contemporary Berlin was born of a politician's delusion—Franklin Roosevelt's belief, nowadays almost beyond comprehension, that Stalin was a man of good will and good faith, with whom it would be possible after World War II to establish a great peace-loving community of nations. All that was needed was a military victory over the fascist tyranny, uncomplicated by any consideration of possible post-War political differences. The legacy of this massive naivety has been, for many of the people of Europe, a tyranny at least as cruel and pitiless as that of Hitler—a vast prison-empire from which the people of East Berlin, Budapest, and Prague have made courageous attempts to escape, only to be crushed by the tanks and guns of their "allies" in the Warsaw Pact.

Although the abortive risings in Hungary (1956) and Czechoslovakia (1968) seized the imagination of the free world, it is Berlin which has been, and remains, at the heart of the ideological confrontation which has dominated world affairs for over a quarter-of-a-century. In the post-War world Berlin has come to be a synonym for crisis. It is the pressure point of Russian strategy in the West.

WHEN General Eisenhower brought the Allied advance to a halt on the line of the River Elbe, he was justified within the strict military context of his main aim—to destroy Hitler's army. The result, however, was the virtual abandonment of Berlin to the Red Army; and although Berlin may by this time have had no great significance as a military objective, its political importance was beyond question. It was, therefore, disastrous that when the time came to set up the Allied Control Council for Germany in Berlin, the Americans, the British and the French had to accept many of the conditions imposed upon them by the Russians, who had been in exclusive control of the city for two months. The most significant of these concerned the administration of the city itself. The Allies wanted to run it as a single unit through a central administration. The Russians insisted that the responsibilities of each nation should be confined to a clearly-defined sector over which it would exercise full and exclusive control. The city of Berlin was therefore, from the very end of the War, divided as surely and as decisively as Germany itself was divided, and the lines were already drawn for the next great power conflict of the 20th century.

THE FIRST TEST OF NERVE and strength came soon. Almost at once the victorious Allies

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started to quarrel about the future of Germany. The Russian view was that it should be treated as a vassal state, to be stripped of its economic resources and reduced to a condition of impotence which would prevent it permanently from posing a military threat in Europe. The allies took the view that if the Germans were encouraged to recover from the disaster of National-Socialism by their own efforts they would be more likely to take their place as peaceful members of a stable and civilised community of nations.

It was this difference of attitude which provided the pretext for the Berlin Blockade of 1948–49. In January 1948, after a period of uneasy bickering over Allied cooperation in the administration of their zones of occupation (which the Russians rightly suspected was directed at the establishment of a unitary state in West Germany) Marshal Sokolovsky, the Russian military governor, told the Allied Control Council that the British and the Americans were deliberately violating the Allied agreements; and in March he announced that this meant that the Control Council no longer existed as an organ of government. The Council never met again. The increasingly obvious partition of Germany was further underlined on 18 June 1948 when the British and Americans launched the new West German currency, the *Deutschmark*. This was what the Russians had been waiting for, and their reaction was immediate. That evening they stopped all passenger traffic from West Germany to Berlin by both road and rail. On the following day Western (primarily American) planning began for the Berlin airlift.

THE FIRST THREE CARGO AIRCRAFT landed in the city just over a week later, carrying 27 tons of provisions. Within a few days supplies were arriving at the rate of 120 tons a day, and by early August British, American and French pilots were flying in a daily load of over 4,000 tons. On 12 May, after 322 days, the blockade was abjectly lifted. Nearly 1,500,000 tons of supplies had been delivered by air; towards the end of the siege 10,000 tons a day were arriving and an aircraft was landing every 90 seconds. The Russian attempt to isolate Berlin had been defeated by the steadfastness of the people of West Berlin (they neither moaned nor groaned under iron rations, and consistently refused offers of "calories" from East Berlin), by the resolution of the Western allies, and by a remarkable feat of sheer organisational skill.

It was the turn of the citizens of East Berlin to suffer the next crisis in the modern history of the city. For the five years following the Blockade, West Germany and West Berlin, sustained by Marshall Aid, made a remarkable economic recovery. The contrast between the Eastern and Western zones of Germany grew more evident; between the East and West sectors of Berlin it was dramatic. There was inevitable discontent in the East, and on 17 June 1953 it erupted into violence. The German workers' revolt began with a complaint over "norms"—the quotas of work demanded in return for a given wage. A general strike was called; the Soviet Army moved in; and on the following day East German police and Russian soldiers fired on a demonstrating crowd and seven people were killed. There were similar incidents all over the Soviet zone and they were all crushed with the thoroughness which only a totalitarian government can display. Hundreds of East Germans were arrested and sentenced.

The events of 17 June underlined the growing alienation between the two halves of Germany. Shooting strikers dead in the streets is not regarded in democratic countries as an acceptable way of conducting industrial relations. Even those who had believed, until then, that it would one day be possible to reunify either the nation or the capital city now recognised that it was out of the question. The people of West Berlin accepted that their future lay largely in their own hands; and by ingenuity, diligence, and a remarkable effort of will, West Berlin performed its own "economic miracle." But if West Berlin prospered, East Berlin did not. Throughout the 1950s the gap between the two

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halves of the city widened, and the inevitable result was at first a trickle, and then a flood, of refugees from East to West.

UP TO THIS TIME the people of East Berlin were still allowed to obtain work in the Western sectors; and divided families could still exchange visits across the sector lines. There was no prohibition against East Berliners taking up residence in the West; and as the bright lights and well-stocked shops of the Kurfuerstendamm began to contrast more and more with the drab squalor of the Stalinallee, more and more of the people of East Germany and East Berlin emigrated to the West. Outraged by this evidence of disenchantment with the Communist paradise the East German authorities decided to shut the gates.

ON 13 AUGUST 1961, the border was closed, and while the Western allies stood by, unable or unwilling to take any action, a Wall was built between the Communist and the Western sectors of the city. It has remained to this day, a crudely built and very ugly monument to a society so intellectually and economically impoverished that it had to construct a prison wall to keep its people in. As Egon Bahr has said (in an interview with *The New Yorker* in 1974),

> "The wall was like a terrible traffic accident. The victim is taken to the hospital, operated on, wakes up after surgery, and is taken to his room, where friends are waiting. They tell him he is lucky he didn't lose his life. Then the friends go away. Eventually the patient discovers that one of his legs has been amputated. . . ."

The latest account of this catastrophe is Curtis Cate's *The Ides of August*,[1] a massive reconstruction of the events leading to the building of the Wall. It might be in order to make, first, a mildly critical comment, based on an ineradicable prejudice against the "imaginary eye-witness account" as a contribution to the recording of history. Mr Cate writes, for example, that

> "at 4.45, when the alarm clock had sounded, Ursula Heinemann had dragged herself from bed. After slipping on a blouse and skirt, she had gone into the kitchen and prepared herself a quick breakfast of coffee, with a boiled egg and a slice of buttered bread and marmalade. . . ."

When I come upon a passage using this much-favoured journalistic technique my first reaction is to wonder what the writer was doing in the lady's apartment at that time in the morning; and, more distractingly, to want the intimate scene to be further illuminated. Was it a four-minute egg? Did Fraulein Heinemann have a bath or brush her teeth? At what stage did she put her shoes on? These minor and somewhat facetious reservations reflect a very real and serious doubt about the validity of the technique. In the first place it imposes upon the reader a proliferation of detail which is of little or no intrinsic importance—rather like the brand-names scattered about the chronicles of James Bond; but, and this is much more important, it blurs the distinction, which ought to be clear in any serious historical account, between observed fact and circumstantial speculation. It has much the same impact as a clock which strikes thirteen—it is not only confusing in itself, but it tends to cast doubt on what has gone before.

These somewhat subjective observations, however, should not be allowed to obscure the real value of Mr Cate's book. He has clearly done a great deal of meticulous research and has collected much of his information from those who actually took part in the events. His narrative line is clear and uncluttered and his descriptive passages evoke the authentic claustrophobia of post-War Berlin.

Mr Cate is rightly contemptuous of the flaccid apathy which characterised the Western reaction—

[1] *The Ides of August*. By CURTIS CATE. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £8.95; M. Evans & Co., $15.00.

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or lack of it—to the building of the Wall. If the comment that "Macmillan was still shooting grouse in Yorkshire, while Lord Home enjoyed the air of the Scottish moors" seems to English ears a shade too much like caricature, it should be remembered that this is what the West Berlin press was bitterly saying at the time; and also that it is literally true—just as it is true that General de Gaulle remained at Colombey-les-deux-Eglises and that President Kennedy was sailing off Hyannis Port. None of this would have been important—no one expects heads of state or of government to cancel their week-end arrangements at the hint of a crisis—had it not symbolised the fact that behind the relaxed attitudes there was nothing: the bland exteriors concealed soft centres. As Mr Cate recalls, the university students of Bonn sent to President Kennedy a "Chamberlain umbrella" in recognition of his passive reaction, together with a letter addressing him as "the worthiest recipient of a fatal policy."

Mr Cate's book provides some fascinating insights into the world of high politics. Perhaps the most startling of these concerns the behaviour of Vice-President Lyndon Johnson on his notorious visit to Berlin. There was always a suggestion of seedy opportunism about this episode, in which the incredible L.B.J. handed out little ball-point pens and large ten-gallon Texas hats to his hosts, like a district officer in colonial Africa distributing salt and beads to the natives. But Mr Cate uncovers vice-Presidential behaviour which so afflicts the imagination as to give a new dimension to the word boggle. During a visit designed to give comfort to the government and people of Berlin in the face of a massive and brutal threat to their freedom, it seems that he expended much of his formidable energy in bullying the Governing Mayor into having a famous porcelain factory and a fashionable shoe-shop opened on a Sunday, so that the Vice-President could order some dishes for the L.B.J. ranch and half-a-dozen pairs of shoes similar to those the disconsolate Willy Brandt happened to be wearing. Only marginally less mind-blowing is Mr Cate's revelation that on the vice-Presidential flight to Berlin the first draft of each of Mr Johnson's speeches was handed to Max Freedman, a journalist employed by what Mr Cate nostalgically refers to as *The Manchester Guardian*, "whose job it was to turn the State Department's 'bureaucratese' into flawless prose." Those who subsequently heard those speeches might be forgiven for wondering what on earth the original versions must have been like.

The main lessons which Mr Cate draws from his examination of the crisis of the Wall are perceptive and difficult to refute. He advances the theory that the "mouse-like" reactions of the United States to the erection of the Wall led inexorably to the Cuba missile crisis of October 1962; and he relates that in a conversation with the American poet Robert Frost just before the Wall went up, Khrushchev suggested that the Western democracies were too old, weak-kneed, and spent to risk a fight with an ardent, dynamic, and ambitious nation like the Soviet Union. He compared the West with "Tolstoy in his old age", impotent but still cherishing aspirations to virility. . . .

A MORE PHLEGMATIC VIEW of the crisis is taken by Mr Mark Arnold Foster, who has written the story of Berlin through its various post-War crises. *The Siege of Berlin*[2] is a more sober and less colourful account than that of Mr Cate. (Incidentally, his publishers have let him down from time to time in the matter of proof-reading. There is really no excuse for mis-spelling two of the most familiar place-names in Berlin—Schoeneberg and the Kurfuerstendamm.) Mr Arnold Foster celebrates the remarkable fortitude and character of the people of Berlin through the Airlift, the uprising of June 1953, and the building of the Wall. He is not concerned to castigate the Western powers for their attitude to the events of 1961; on the contrary he refers admiringly to the "impeccable Anglo-American cooperation" during the Blockade. His conclusion, however, although expressed with more restraint than that of Mr Cate, carries similar implications for future western foreign policy.

> ". . . if West Berlin is to live its life in liberty, the West's moral and comradely commitment to the West Berliners must . . . be accepted and understood by the man in the Oval Office."

Mr Arnold Foster does not provide anything like Mr Cate's wealth of detail, whether about breakfast marmalade, the manners and habits of Western politicians, or the complicated saraband of international negotiations. His canvas is much broader

[2] *The Siege of Berlin*. By MARK ARNOLD FOSTER. Collins, £6.50.

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and his method more direct. The light that he sheds upon the fabric of Berlin, however, is occasionally reflected from the surface at an unexpected angle—as when he points out that during the Airlift the Allies took care to fly in, along with the coal, the flour, the spam, the egg powder, and the candles, enough newsprint to keep a free press going in Berlin. As Mr Arnold Foster comments, to some Berliners this seemed an amazing objective, but to the British and Americans it seemed an obvious and important exercise in democracy (and indeed in the stabilisation of an enlightened public opinion).

THE LESSON OF these two books, and indeed of the whole story of Berlin since the end of World War II, is one which Western politicians seem curiously reluctant to learn. When the Russians tried to drive the Allies out of Berlin in 1948 they were confronted with the Airlift, and eventually they had to back down; when they and their allies built the Wall in 1961, the only show of strength from the West consisted of Lyndon Johnson and half-a-regiment of tanks. It is not surprising that a journalist of *Pravda*, referring contemptuously to this performance in 1962, said:

". . . the day we decide to cut those access routes, it will be done just like that. There may be a whimper or two, but that will be the extent of American reaction."

The access routes have not been cut—yet. But much else has happened in the world since the heady days of the Airlift. Popular risings in Hungary, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia have been summarily crushed. Russian influence in South-east Asia, Africa, and the Middle East has grown significantly as a direct consequence of an aggressive Soviet foreign policy and the extensive use of surrogate forces. Only twice—in 1962, when the "Cuba missile crisis" directly threatened the security of the United States, and in 1973 when the Russians threatened to intervene in the Arab–Israel conflict—has there been a firm and unequivocal response to the persistent, probing *Weltpolitik* of the Soviet Union.

The flyleaf of Curtis Cate's book carries a quotation from Walter Ulbricht, the East German Communist leader and the architect of the Wall. In June 1961 he issued a solemn statement of policy: *Niemand hat die Absicht, eine Mauer zu errichten* (Nobody has the intention of building a wall). It is a statement worth bearing in mind the next time some ringing declaration of pacific intent is delivered from the Communist empire on the other side of the Elbe.

Apotheosis

A figure from an upstairs window seen
In a narrow three-hundred-yards away
Long space of blue, between
Morocco green high trees.

White in this situation, walking
Slowly, on—so once it was called—
A lawn, between high trees. And this
White figure is? A curio? From that

Smooth shop in the right street
Which sells indifferent prints of
The Floating World? Now meaning—
Less? Fake? It may be. Certainly

She goes; crossing slowly now the
Perspective blue. She disappears. Her antique
Lawn now is a space again of casuality
Between the morocco green high trees.

At one time, glimpsing her, we would
Have worried queerly. We should have risked
No disrespect. We would have
Gone down on our knees.

Geoffrey Grigson

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MEMOIR

Confessions of a Biographer

By Andrew Boyle

THERE CAN BE something almost frightening in the writing of a biography. Like Pygmalion, but through words rather than sculptured stone, the biographer brings the dead to life; and the effect is not always pleasing to the next-of-kin. Perhaps the analogy of the portrait-painter would be more exact. For nobody can tell, except the prejudiced sitter, how much of the artist goes into the finished canvas, or to what degree a Winston Churchill's less endearing characteristics may be distorted by the inspired impressionism of a Graham Sutherland. I remember hearing how Sutherland, as rightly reluctant as any self-respecting portrait-painter should be to let his august and insatiably curious sitter see how the great undertaking was progressing, employed certain legitimate deceits to prevent this happening. If so, I sympathise and wholly approve. A self-disciplined biographer, too, if foolish or rash enough to write about a living person, has a similar obligation to keep his own counsel and persist in reaching his own conclusions. How can he be expected to preserve a due detachment while his subject persists in looking over his shoulder, breathing down his neck, and trying to guide the pen or second-guess the typewriter?

Experience has taught me two golden rules which I have passed on at least twice to other would-be biographers: first, never write about the living; and, second, never write about your wife, husband, son, daughter or next-of-kin. The pitfalls are too deep and too many. And unless you chance to have had an eccentric genius in the family, and to possess the narrative skill of an Edmund Gosse, it's at least ten-to-one that you will fail in the attempt almost as surely as nine autobiographers out of ten fail properly to account for themselves.

I stumbled into the rock-strewn field of biography largely by accident. A little over 25 years ago, when the exploits of War-heroes were still much in vogue, a close friend fell dangerously ill. Group Captain Leonard Cheshire, VC, DSO, DFC, was no ordinary survivor of the air war against Nazi Germany. He once told me that, had it not been for Hitler, he would quite probably have become a highly successful gentleman-crook in the Raffles mould. Instead he developed, against all the odds, into a brilliant bomber pilot who quietly bent all the rules in his own way. The more difficult the target, the greater seemed to be his determination to hit it with precision. The special target-marking techniques pioneered by Cheshire and his aircrews made nonsense of the blind "area-bombing" policy with which the name of Sir Arthur Harris continues (if somewhat unfairly) to be inseparably linked. At the very end of hostilities Cheshire (accompanied by William Penney, the distinguished atomic physicist) watched the awesome destruction of Nagasaki from a B-29 high above and beyond the city. Not without obstructions, he thus witnessed the second nuclear attack on Japan in his capacity as the Prime Minister's chosen observer. Now he lay in bed stricken with advanced tuberculosis, uncertain whether his new post-War activities on behalf of "the unwanted sick" could carry on without him. One day, when I visited him in the sanatorium, he startled me by asking: "What do you think of the idea of a biography?" "Of you, do you mean?" "Yes, of me." "Well", I faltered, "it may become a good idea, say, in 30 years." "Odd you should say that. My father was in earlier and he shares your view."

We dropped the matter. Then, a few days later, there came a letter from a publisher. Within a month, braving numerous hazards, not a few of which were raised by my unpredictable subject himself, I was at work on my first biography. It proved to be a most exacting experiment, one which I shall never willingly repeat. What may have sustained me, particularly during the early months of research and composition, was the subconscious feeling, which Leonard Cheshire may well have shared, that I was writing about a young man already as good as dead. He was in his mid-thirties, I a couple of years younger. I persevered in the task, seeking what Michael Holroyd has acutely described as the posthumous re-creation of an extraordinary man of action. At that early stage I had hardly begun to articulate to myself what I was seeking to achieve. Instinctively, however, I was more or less faithfully following the prescription established by good practitioners since Boswell's day and adhering to clinically detached standards. "Techniques must differ", in Holroyd's words, "but the universal method must be for the biographer to discover exactly what their relationship is, and then give that relationship a literary pattern, a living shape. . . ."

Perhaps what I left out of the reckoning was my subject's remarkable aptitude for defying death. Cheshire spent fully 26 months in his sanatorium. He underwent two major operations on his diseased lungs. Then, slowly, he recovered. I fear that a reading of my first draft of his life may have slowed down that recovery.

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HE OBJECTED STRENUOUSLY to a number of things, none of them terribly serious. By what right did I, who had helped to foster the myth in earlier, journalistic articles, now claim that the Nagasaki experience was anything but a "road to Damascus" for Leonard Cheshire? He was unimpressed by my defence that I had written those earlier pieces without benefit of the vivid testimony of William Penney, Clement Attlee, and other first-hand witnesses, simply accepting the easy, popular myth at face value and repeating it. A full-scale biography was different, surely, from a newspaper or magazine article.

He did not wish to comment on the chapters covering childhood, youth, and the momentous War years. These elements mattered far less to him than his more recent and all-important "mission for the relief of suffering", infinitely less than his personal conversion from a good-natured form of agnosticism to Catholicism. My account of the conversion, he complained, was one-sided and incomplete. As for the small amount of space devoted to his life as a thorough-going Christian, that was lamentable and quite inexcusable.

We had a number of arguments. We finally agreed on several minor changes in the text, though not in the structure of the book. We learnt in the process to respect one another more; and it says a good deal for Cheshire's indifference to renown that my Sutherland-like portrait of him appeared in print, more or less intact. Were he to die in the morning I doubt whether I should wish to alter it, however deeply its harsher lines hurt him at first glance.

WHILE CORRECTING the proofs and quietly resolving never to tackle another portrait from the life, I received an unexpected call which put paid to all such good resolutions. An Air Chief Marshal whom I knew told me that Lord Trenchard, the founding father of the Royal Air Force, was looking for a biographer and wished to talk to me. It appeared that Trenchard, a formidable octogenarian, had buried his first scribe and just fired his second. Trenchard, though nearly blind, kept well abreast of events by hiring readers to come in daily and intone the contents of *The Times* and other periodicals. Occasionally, this ephemeral fare would be varied with a chapter from some current new book of interest to this demanding listener. My Air Chief Marshal had thoughtfully offered Trenchard page-proofs of the wartime chapters of my book which had left Cheshire rather unmoved. "Who's this fellow Boyle?", boomed Trenchard. "I wonder if he'll do—he seems to have a feeling for the matter in him. . . ."

He took me on, and I survived him. I would visit him nearly every morning, ask questions, and listen to him thundering on interminably about the men, women, and events of a vanished age. He had considerably mellowed in old age. I filled several notebooks with his personal reflections, impressions, judgments. He wanted me to paint a balanced picture, not an unstable chocolate-box caricature that flattered him; since time had certainly smoothed away the awkward lumps and bumps of his character, I had my work cut out finding and interviewing witnesses who, as he put it, "helped or hindered me" in the formative years.

I grew to admire this tough, good-humoured, seemingly ferocious giant who, for good or ill, had the vision to build an Air Force and fight for its independent existence between the two World Wars. The voluminous personal and official papers he had collected served to complicate my task after his death. Had he lived, I believe that he would probably have sacked me, too, and found a more pliable, fourth biographer. Nevertheless, I glowed inwardly when the historian A. J. P. Taylor paid me an unexpected compliment in the bibliography of his *English History 1914–1945* in the Oxford series: "*Trenchard* by Andrew Boyle", he noted, "has great value not only for the rise of an independent airforce, but for Trenchard's unique influence as chief of the air staff between 1919 and 1929. . . ."

THE PLEASURE this gave me was comparable to the agreeable shock I had received when, for some inexplicable reason, *Figaro Littéraire* decided to serialise the Cheshire biography in six weekly instalments. I was sensible enough to appreciate that this accolade probably had nothing whatever to do with literary merit as such. The French, it seemed, had at the time a deep hunger for documentary information on the strategic and tactical reasons for the air attacks, most of them astoundingly accurate, on numerous targets in the Pas de Calais and elsewhere during the preparations for D-Day. Their own histories remained to be published. Mine was merely a small precursor with a rarity value which would not last. Still, the sense of being in demand gave me an unwarranted self-importance; and pride comes invariably before a fall.

AN EMINENT, elderly Canadian banker invited me out of the blue to a suite he used for business purposes in the Savoy and there invited me to consider his former master and idol, Montagu Norman, as a suitable subject for analysis. I hedged; I had to, in all conscience. What I knew of the man who had ruled the Bank of England from the end of the First World War until his mysterious withdrawal from the Governor's chair in 1944 was next to nothing. I was dimly

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aware that he had exerted unrepeatable influence over the finances of the country—and the minds of successive Chancellors, not excepting Winston Churchill—before and during the years of slump and depression. Sir Henry Clay, the economist, had written a fairly colourless tome purporting to be a "life", carefully omitting anything personal which might have conveyed hints of Norman's elusive and magisterial essence. Clay, it appeared, had been killed in a street accident before completing his work; various hands at the Bank of England had tinkered with a concluding chapter; but nobody concerned professed true satisfaction. Would I like the commission to write a compensatory character study? I promised to think about it.

I genuinely doubted whether the job could be done. After all, Montagu Norman had died more than a decade previously. There were not a few people who could testify at first hand to his strengths and weaknesses towards the close of his career, yet where could I turn for evidence of the possibly crucial early days? We left it that I should take six months at least to determine whether the thing "would write" for me; and I refused more than one attempt to offer financial assistance on the simple pretext that I preferred to remain quite independent in making up my mind.

Luck was with me at first. One afternoon I called at a house in Park Street, Mayfair, which I mistook for a group of select maisonettes. My host, who was seemingly very deaf, sat in his library reading a beautifully hand-bound novel in Spanish and did not evince any real enthusiasm for my project. Assuming him to be harder of hearing than was the case, I stated frankly how far I had progressed in my research, how eccentric and yet enigmatic Montagu Norman struck me as a subject, and why I intended to abandon the whole business if I failed to crack the enigma. Suddenly my host forgot his deafness and said: "This is quite a different proposition. I feared you were just another of the bland hagiographers who buzz like bluebottles round men they regard as immortal. Young man, I'll help you all I can, but do remember that only one writer could ever have done justice to Norman—Marcel Proust, and he's dead. . . ."

It was quite a speech. I learnt a great deal from this key witness who led me on to others as wry and critical as himself. In the event I managed to write the book and enjoyed even the daunting bits dealing with "High Finance." Because Montagu Norman happened to be a walking paradox, an aesthete as well as an imperious banker, an intuitive genius by fits and starts as well as a hard-headed businessman, a strong personality who cultivated an aura of mystery for its own sake, my portrait offended members of his family. They tried to suppress it. They instituted legal proceedings to that end. They finally failed, though not through want of trying. I felt a little like Augustus John who caught the authentic likeness in a way that gravely upset the sitter, so much so that Norman refused to have the unflattering object inside the Bank or his home. A worse fate would have awaited my book, had it appeared in his lifetime; of that I am perfectly sure.

ONE OF THE CURIOSITIES of a biographer's craft is the way in which, quite fortuitiously, the choice of a subject can lead to the next. A critic once wrote that I specialised in "weird people." Since all men and women must be counted "weird" in their sacrosanct and exclusive individualism, however dull, however droll, the claim did not upset me. It so happened that I was still working at the BBC for my livelihood, scribbling away in my leisure hours, when my fourth subject hove into sight.

John Reith had long left Broadcasting House by the time we first met. Surprisingly enough, it was Trenchard who had suggested the meeting, gruffly explaining: "He and I had a splendid quarrel once, and out of it some good came to both of us."

Reith spoke with animation about his "up and down" with Trenchard who had apparently complained that the proposed height of the BBC transmitter mast at Daventry was endangering the lives of RAF pilots in the vicinity. Surely the mast could be lowered a little? Reith refused, but eventually some mutually acceptable compromise was reached. Trenchard had later shown him round the new service's apprentice training centre at Halton, and the two men became friendly. I remember thanking Reith for telling me this anecdote and preparing to leave. However, fixing me with his Ancient Mariner stare, he insisted on telling me a lot about himself. It was all written down, he said, in the diary he had religiously kept for many years. Now that life was so increasingly tedious, he felt constrained to burn the diary: "If this building had a furnace in the basement, I'd have consigned the thing to the flames long ago. . . ."

The fate of his diary had become an obsession. At subsequent encounters with Reith it would bob up, unbidden, to the surface as though he had no power to check it. No doubt he grew equally tired of my consistent comment that "to destroy something like this would be an act of vandalism." Inevitably a day came when I uttered the words only to be fixed by a disconcerting stare: "Am I your next subject then?" he asked witheringly.

In fact, he was, though the book was certainly not commissioned. It did not deeply grieve me to learn from him that Sir John Masterman had urged that the diary should be edited by someone else, as I had seen enough of the contents to realise that the key to Reith's complex and self-tortured spirit lay elsewhere. His hot-line to the Almighty worked less effectively in the period of his worldly achievement,

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above all in the longer period of his thwarted ambition to rule India as Viceroy or Great Britain as a despotic Prime Minister. "That Wuthering Height" was Churchill's unkindly if understandable way of describing a Wartime junior Minister who never felt at home among inscrutably polite civil servants at the departments of Information, Transport, or Town and Country Planning—and never felt "fully stretched" anywhere. Increasing frustration was the lot he had to share with Trenchard and the aloof Montagu Norman, both of whom erred in supposing that this younger, morbidly critical man-of-parts had it in him to scale the political heights in an embattled democracy.

I WAS AT THE RAF base in Cyprus on a June day in 1971 when an assistant at the Forces' radio station on the island rang through to tell me that Lord Reith had died. On the night flight home I decided to hurry on with the biography which I had already begun. It was completed before Christmas that year, not without a preliminary minor brush or two with solemn BBC mandarins who feared the worst, and vainly tried to force me into a corner. On being reprimanded for some excess of zeal or other, I was taken aback by the following quite irrelevant remark: "Then there's your book on Reith." Well, what about it, I said.

"We require to see it before publication." Really, I said, but why.

"We require to see it, that's all." Yes, but with what in mind—surely not censorship, I said.

"Perish the thought", replied the mandarin. If not censorship, then what: could it be accuracy? He clutched gratefully at the helpful straw. "Accuracy it is", he said.

This made me cross: "I've news for you", I said. "You would have seen the manuscript in any event. It's a normal precaution and courtesy in any biography about a person closely connected with an institution. The Air Ministry saw my Trenchard life and so did the Bank of England without necessarily approving of my comments, tone, or conclusions. Since you've raised the point, however, in an objectionable way, I'd also like a record of this part of the conversation. . . ."

One outcome of the exchanges, a blessing in disguise as it turned out, was that I obtained formal permission to consult the BBC Archives. I need not have bothered. Surprisingly little existed that I had not already found elsewhere; indeed, on the vexed question of Reith's departure in high dudgeon from the place he had founded, the official records were dumb. I learnt later that a certain Director General in the 1950s had delegated a colleague to visit the ageing Ronald Norman at his home with a view to prising out the information, and had then called off the quest after a heated altercation with Reith. Since this younger brother of Montagu Norman had gratuitously given me the information (duly noted down at the time) while I was researching my study of the former Governor of the Bank of England, I could afford to smile quietly.

The BBC has peculiar rules of its own in safeguarding the archives from the attentions of authors. Personal files, for instance, are withheld and may not be inspected. Even Lord Briggs, the Corporation's official historian, was denied direct access to these documents, some of which could conceivably have shed valuable light in dark places, in all but the first of the four volumes he has so far produced on the development of broadcasting in Britain. I was horrified when Asa Briggs mentioned the fact, and I was equally horrified by the BBC's rigid adherence to the rule when I approached the present Director General, Ian Trethowan, for permission to examine the personal file of Guy Burgess who, in between his activities as a spy for the Russians, toiled away tastefully as a talks producer in the Corporation's employment both before and during the Second World War.[1] At first Trethowan agreed willingly enough. Alas, a few days later he wrote again to admit that he had "dropped a clanger": the personal file of Burgess could *not* be inspected. This folk-figure and anti-hero of our time may rest in peace, secure in the knowledge that the BBC will protect his good name and possibly that of others who thought too highly of him. Again, I was not unduly aggrieved for my own sake, having found out sufficient for my purposes from contemporary witnesses and merely seeking confirmation in the contemporary written sources. Nevertheless, the rule does strike me as an instance of that "pontifical mugwumpery" with which Churchill, no fervent admirer of the House that Reith Built, charged the BBC in pre-War days.

SOMETIMES IT IS BETTER for a biographer to go forth unencumbered by any personal papers or records. By an odd coincidence, it was another BBC Director-General, Sir William Haley, who prompted me to uncover the mysterious trail of Brendan Bracken, the self-styled natural son of the late Sir Winston, who (in the telling phrase applied once by Kitty Muggeridge to David Frost) had "risen without a trace." Often, in a writer's researches, one book will point the way to another. Haley, having demolished (in a long letter to me) some far-fetched accusation which Reith had levelled at him, went on to pay generous tribute to the subtle dexterity of Bracken in the Wartime Ministry of Information. This Irish adventurer,

[1] This material was wanted by me for a forthcoming book on the political and spiritual distemper of the 1930s, which led a number of young intellectuals, including "the Fourth and Fifth Men" to serve the clandestine interests of the Soviet Union.

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dubbed by the naturally jealous Randolph Churchill as "God's greatest liar", had installed Haley in the BBC to raise professional standards, soon promoting him to the top job without troubling to consult the Board of Governors.

"You ought to have a shot at Bracken's life-story", said Haley. I hedged, well aware that at least three people had already tried and given up. As in the case of Montagu Norman, I allowed myself six months to determine whether it could be done, and again luck favoured me.

It was inconvenient, of course, that Bracken had laid down in his will that all his papers should be committed to the fire in the grate of his study within 24 hours of his death. The instruction was faithfully carried out. But my *daemon* whispered that for every original copy destroyed there might be a carbon somewhere, and that Bracken was an 18th-century throwback who had frequently written letters in his own singular, copy-plate hand. I was rather confident on the day I visited the Cheltenham home of a daughter of the former headmaster of Sedbergh, Dr William Weech, and was looking through a diary and a photograph album. Weech, it should be explained, had agreed to admit to the school for a trial-term the voluble young stranger claiming to be a mere sixteen (Bracken was actually nearly twenty) and more than anxious to pay the fees in advance with a cheque that did not bounce. While the lady and I continued to turn the pages of the album, a piece of paper fluttered to the floor and landed, face up. I recognised the unmistakable handwriting. It was a letter dated November 1941, which Bracken had written to Weech explaining succinctly why Neville Gorton, a cleric on the teaching staff of the school during Bracken's brief stay, was being appointed to the see of Coventry, a most merited preferment in the letter-writer's view. The patronage office did not much interest the Prime Minister, as it happened, so Bracken more than compensated. He had the run of it and enjoyed himself hugely.

Many other uncovenanted discoveries of the kind speeded my quest for Brendan Bracken. The resulting book was primarily a work of literary detection. It happened to win a prize, and the prize-money the Inland Revenue foolishly and vainly sought in due course to tax—it lost the argument in a recent test-case. Earlier, just to indicate how careful a biographer must be at all times, the then librarian of Churchill College, Cambridge, had huffily enquired why I had not sought approval to start digging in various parts of England, Scotland and Ireland for literary clues, regardless of the fact that the College authorities were the residuary legatees, and therefore the legal owners of everything I had industriously turned up. Did I, or did I not, propose to share the fruits of my industry with them? I did not; in the end they accepted my apologies for that little oversight. I never learnt whether they took my advice and went bald-headed for Beaverbrook's heirs: being a magpie and a hoarder in his own right, as well as an eager collector of other men's political papers, the first and last Lord Beaverbrook bequeathed to his late, lamented Foundation Library behind Fleet Street all the letters he had exchanged over the years with Bracken. They were most useful—and very enlightening. Churchill College knew nothing about them either. I still wonder at times if they have retrieved the copies.

THE TRIALS and tribulations encountered in preparing my latest book for the press proved more considerable than any in the past and may not yet be over. I expected difficulties because, in trying to combine the writing of a "collective biography" of certain British citizens who worked as undercover Soviet agents with a survey of the period in which they grew to manhood, I stumbled on two new ones in addition to the familiar trio of Burgess, Maclean, and Philby.

The lawyers were adamant that "names must not be named." For though I gathered indisputable evidence to prove that both men spied for the Russians and had confessed to the security services, the evidence came in part from members of the secret service who, for all legal purposes, simply do not exist. I also held, and still do, that it was no strict duty of mine but of the Government to disclose the identity of Anthony Blunt. I may say that my publisher (and I through him) has been bothered at regular intervals by a well-dressed representative of "the firm", whose repeated hints that I seemed to be working against "the national interest" were keenly resented. In contrast to the dozens of professional agents, British and American, who had assisted me with information unobtainable from any archives, this watchdog had only veiled threats to offer. I think I know what he was afraid of: he may have heard (there is a secret grapevine) of the two fresh candidates for notoriety whom I was said to have tracked down, and he had equally heard that the disclosures might cause undesirable friction between the intelligence communities in London and Washington, since the clandestine exploits of the "Fifth Man" and his particular role in the Burgess-Maclean-Philby conspiracy had not been passed on to the British secret service by the CIA. As for the "Fourth Man", who confessed and was pardoned, perhaps it struck panic into the hearts of "spooks" that his identity might leak out, before or after publication, as indeed happened.

WHETHER ANY self-respecting author can seriously pretend not to care what the critics say about his

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written work must be doubted. Publishers exist to sell books, authors to write them, critics to commend them (or not) to readers. Many of us have been in the business long enough not to worry overmuch when highly-skilled lancers like Dame Rebecca West or A. J. P. Taylor puncture our vanity and self-esteem at a weekend stroke in the columns of a posh Sunday. The paradoxes of experience have taught me the lesson that reviewers are seldom read carefully and often are not read at all: your curious but busy reader simply adopts as an easy rule-of-thumb the formula that the longer any review runs, the finer and more meritorious the book under discussion. Nevertheless, past experience did not prepare me for the unprecedented furore that has greeted *The Climate of Treason*.

Casting my mind back, I can say in all honesty that I had no great faith in the original idea for the book (which some four years ago seemed to me very far from original); and I vowed in various ways that I would not persist with it unless my researches produced some entirely new and vital evidence. I considered then that too much inevitably superficial attention had already been paid to the nefarious and still partly mysterious activities of Burgess, Maclean, Philby, and their known or unknown accomplices; yet I was drawn to the daunting problem of trying to unravel and define the tangled roots of those treasonable doubts which made so many men and women of my own and earlier generations turn in the 1930s to Stalinist-Leninism as to a saving world force. I remember the doubtful expression on the face of my London publisher on hearing that an American house, not without some deft pushing from my agent, had already signed my contract. I recall dismally my own recurring reservations, as I browsed through the records of ancient schools and universities, real reservations brought on by the studiously detached perspective of such advisers as the late Sir Herbert Butterfield, the "historian's historian" from Cambridge, who insisted firmly: "Only if you find truly cogent evidence should you dream of publishing. . . ."

Butterfield did not live long enough to read the results of my years of enquiry. He would not, I think, have approved of the anonymity in which I had to wrap the identities of the two new spies-for-Russia whom I succeeded in finding along the way. In theory at any rate, Butterfield had as little regard for the ludicrous niceties of the Official Secrets Act in its still unreformed state as he had for the arbitrary workings of the libel laws: "Publish—and be damned", was his repetitive, mischievous refrain. My publisher's lawyers, not unnaturally, decided otherwise. If, in the course of digging for clues, I had indeed unearthed those two important "moles", both moles being alive and well and living in London and Washington, respectively, then on no account must I think of naming them. Furthermore, clues to their identity must not be idly scattered like seeds throughout the text. Such were and are the conflicts of our English libel legislation and the rigidities of the Official Secrets Act that, quite apart from being technically in breach of that Act already by setting down the bare bones of my discoveries, I could equally be sued for libel by one or other or both spies, with no chance of summoning as witnesses for the defence any members of the secret communities who had directly or indirectly confirmed my discoveries. Imagine my feelings when the first antagonistic move against me was made—almost a month before publication—by one of the two unnamed ex-Soviet agents who had

Whisper

London

A FULL SCALE *inquiry into the Blunt affair is likely to uncover the names of more former Soviet agents, including ex-members of the Diplomatic Service.*

Mrs Thatcher is under mounting pressure in Parliament and behind the scenes to order a full investigation into the security authorities' mishandling of the scandal. Demands for an inquiry have been strengthened by the charge that Blunt had at least half-a-dozen accomplices in diplomatic posts and the academic world who have not yet been unmasked.

Andrew Boyle whose book "Climate of Treason" sparked the Blunt disclosure, said today that the identity of the Fifth Man "will have to wait until the American authorities unmask him, if they ever do."

"Will the unmasking of Blunt lead to the disclosure of further names? I doubt if that will happen. I certainly have no intention of making public what I know, preferring that the authorities should do their own dirty work."

"I FIRST STUMBLED **[Andrew Boyle writes] on the possible complicity of Anthony Blunt in the Burgess-Maclean-Philby affair about three years ago when I uncovered an important circumstantial clue. It came from Goronwy Rees, former Bursar of All Souls (Oxford), who, for sound legal reasons, had been obliged to cut out certain names from his autobiography** *A Chapter of Accidents*. **I asked him as we left a pub not far from his home one Saturday afternoon, who was the particular person named by Guy Burgess in 1936? (Not, I think, in 1937, the year given in Mrs Thatcher's prepared statement to the Commons last Thursday.) Burgess had admitted to Rees that he had been a Comintern agent since his Cambridge days and that there were other 'friends' helping him.**

"Goronwy whispered in my ear the two words: 'Anthony Blunt.' I was aware by then that, inspired by Burgess, my prime suspect had unobtrusively turned the proceedings of 'The Apostles', a secret society of the cultural élite, into a progressive Marxist cell."

THE OBSERVER *(London)*

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confessed his misdeeds to the security authorities years before and had received for his pains the equivalent of a free pardon![2]

I was quite unaccustomed to the experience of living in a rising hurricane of speculation and unsought publicity. I did not greatly like it. I liked it even less when one popular newspaper, the *Daily Mail*, after conducting its own rapid if inevitably superficial enquiry, began to pour cold water on my "amateurish findings." As the furore went on, the pundits weighed in with their verdicts. I was undismayed by the lukewarm dismissiveness of A. J. P. Taylor, whom I usually admire and respect, because no man is infallible and every historian has his blind-spots. I felt Malcolm Muggeridge, a former Communist and an orthodox spy for Britain during World War II, divined my intentions more exactly in comparing the unhealthy climate of radical Britain in the 1930s to the climate so meticulously analysed by Dostoevsky in *The Devils*. As to the peculiar legalities in which I found myself haphazardly involved, it seemed to me that Anthony Howard put a shrewd finger on one of the Establishment's exposed nerve-centres when he wrote (in *The Listener*):

> "I'm not sure that Boyle's book does not in itself provide a marvellous test of the new Bill [the proposed Protection of Information Act]. No Government—given Mr Justice Caulfield's caustic comments in the *Sunday Telegraph* case of 1971 about the old Section Two being due to be 'pensioned off'—was ever going to dare to bring proceedings over the unearthing of a 30-year-old security scandal. But arm the Home Office with a gleaming new weapon (complete with 'silencer')—and I'd have said it was all the Queen's Pictures to a China orange that it would not hesitate to use it."

JUST A YEAR AGO, as I have already mentioned, I took on a department of government and won a celebrated test case. *The Climate of Treason* has been published too soon, perhaps, to become a serious test-case in the courts. The British obsession with official secrecy amounts to a dangerous monomania. As Dame Rebecca West pointed out several years ago in a splendid essay, normal care for security *can* be harmonised with the preservation of freedom: "Our task", she stressed, "is equivalent to walking on a tightrope over an abyss, but the continued survival of our species through the ages shows that if we human beings have a talent, it is for tightrope-walking. . . ."

We shall have to wait and see. Meanwhile, I am bearing up well on the whole, enjoying my lives and, through them, trying to redeem the times.

[2] Two weeks after my book was published, the widespread speculation over the identity of my "Maurice" led to a statement in the House of Commons naming him as Sir Anthony Blunt, the well-known art-historian and Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures.

Icons

The peacock's enamelled on his bit of woodland,
flat, bright and kitsch as a factory icon.

Only when a tiny motor whizzes madly
on and off in his quills like a rattlesnake,

and our spines reply, in spite of themselves,
with a faint, pre-orgasmic tingling,

do we know, with the peahens, that he's serious
and guileless under the frozen

fire of his apparent hauteur,
and it's us that the fence has its arms round

—a lesson to birds, up-life-like visual aids
illustrating the extreme predicament

of marriages and cities, behind us
a car with a parking ticket, a day turned rainy.

Carol Rumens

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IN THE MARGIN

Of Pilgrims & Dupes

1917 & All That

By Melvin J. Lasky

HOW COULD I have overlooked mentioning it? It now occurs to me that nowhere in my recent "Moscow Diary" (August) did I record what astonished (and also pleased) me, namely, that I didn't catch a glimpse anywhere of a picture of Stalin and that, try as I might, I couldn't quite manage to cross the police cordons in Red Square to get past the Mausoleum (where he used to lie in state next to Lenin) and close to the spot on the Kremlin wall where his grave is still (barely) memorialised.

But my friends the Kremlinologists hasten to tell me that "Joseph *Who?*" is now beginning to make something of a come-back. For years the once omnipotent Soviet dictator was unmentioned in the whole Eastern press, but he is now being quoted rather more often. For example, after a recent article praising him in the official S.E.D. Party organ, *Neues Deutschland*, the East Berlin evening newspaper, *BZ am Abend*, now refers to him as "Stalin, that outstanding and far-sighted observer. . . ." Does it make any difference? Does anybody but Kremlinological observers pay any serious attention to such Orwellian twists-and-turns? Indeed it was George Orwell who said—it must have been, as best as I can recall, in 1946—"In five years it may be as dangerous to praise Stalin as it was to attack him two years ago. But I should not regard this as an advance. Nothing is gained by teaching the parrot a new word. . . ."

But are the parrots only giving forth meaningless jabber? Do they have memories to recall the sounds of yesterday? The 40th anniversary of the Russo-German Non-Aggression pact of 23 August 1939 was recently marked; and I note how squawkingly ultra-sensitive the Kremlin has been to all the Western articles of observance. "Monstrous lies" are being fabricated about the Nazi-Communist "friendship sealed in blood", to which Stalin, elated with the work of Molotov and Ribbentrop, had raised his glass in an historic toast.

Yet what is important about all the mechanical noises and silences that emerge from the Muscovite Ministry of Truth is that even if no one believes the propaganda, no one knows what actually took place and therefore history really has been consigned to a memory-hole. When I asked old-time foreign correspondents in Moscow about it I was told that "nobody under the age of 60 has any notion of what happened in 1939 when the Hitler-Stalin pact was the sensation of the day and the actual prelude to war. . . ." In dissident circles they knew, to be sure, of the tragic fate of so many German Communists in Moscow who, like Margarete Buber-Neumann, were handed over by the *NKVD* to the *Gestapo*. But those who have had a chance to talk with members of the younger Soviet generation have drawn almost a complete blank on the subject. Khrushchev made his short-lived attempt to hack away at the image of the *Vozhd* as a great Russian patriot; but as "far-sighted" as Stalin he was not.

BUT HOW DOES IT LOOK on the other side of the "Curtain"? How proud can we be of the kind of history which is, or is not, being served up to our own Common Man?

On these subjects of Russian history we have, to be sure, libraries full of researched studies, and in some of the great Western institutes (Harvard, the Hoover, St Antony's in Oxford) there are documentary collections of fundamental and invaluable primary sources. I remember the excitement when one Allied officer, taking his career in his hands, refused to return some of the captured World War II documents and saw to it that they were kept in the West. One of the astonishing documents was the Smolensk archive of the *C.P.S.U.(B)* which had first been found by the *Gestapo* in Russia and then by the Americans in post-War Germany; Merle Fainsod used it extensively in his pioneering study of *How Russia is Ruled*. Of course it belonged legally to the Soviet authorities; but, for once, scholarly rights came before property rights.

No doubt about it, we know a good deal about the subject; and from time to time we learn more from Russian historians when they have an opportunity to write openly and to dip into their own archives at least as freely as Khrushchev did when he wanted some hard revealing facts for his "Secret Speech" of 1956.[1] If we have on this level any serious shortcomings, it is, in Mark Twain's

[1] See Merle Fainsod's article in the March 1962 ENCOUNTER: "Soviet-Russian Historians: L'Affaire Burdzhalov."

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distinction, not because we are ignorant but because we "know so many things that ain't so. . . ." I think of the vast distortions which still remain, at least in part, in my own mind as a result of an enthusiastic boyhood reading of Leon Trotsky's marvellously written *History of the Russian Revolution*. One looks forward to the new work on this period by Professor Richard Pipes whose research, as he tells me, has uncovered important and surprisingly unread documents here in London, at the British Museum.

What is infuriating is not inevitable Eastern unawareness nor occasional Western misinterpretations, but wilful twisting among our own media popularisers who should know better but allow their ideological prejudices to dictate how the story is told to the people in simple forms. We all recall the now out-dated frauds, put on prime-time TV screens and between covers of best-sellers, about the peaceful happy New China under Chairman Mao and his stalwart band of sterling advisers (now exposed as the nefarious "Gang of Four").

I SEE THAT a scandal is already developing over the collaborative American-Soviet film documentary recording the history of the Eastern Front during World War II. Reports of various compromises sound foul enough; and the West Germans with their special national sensitivities on how the Hitler-Stalin slaughters are presented have already announced they would not be showing it on their television channels.

But is what they have been showing on their own screens anything like a model of fair and scrupulous historical documentation? In Bonn recently I caught some instalments of the German Television's ambitious 5-hour account of the "Inheritance of Red October." One was almost driven frantic by the thought that obviously most of the authoritative historians of Europe and America had been writing in vain. The terror and violence of Lenin's *putsch* to establish Bolshevik power was played down and almost omitted, for after all the whole "progressive" affair was basically "an attempt to take Russia out of the middle ages into the modern era. . . ." Any acknowledgement of real Russian progress (and it was substantial) in the decades before 1914, when Count Witte and his reformers began to push through industrialisation and modernisation, escaped my eye and ear. "White terror" there was, but no sign of "Red terror" (which began the liquidation of all liberal and democratic parties, and decimated the ranks of even the Mensheviks and the Anarchists). One didn't have to take the word of Leonard Schapiro or William Henry Chamberlin, whose critical works may be considered "hostile"; surely the chronicle of those days by Maxim Gorky is vivid and persuasive enough.[2] But evidently the West German TV historians placed more reliance on Soviet textbooks, and from these they were falsely instructed that the "small farmers" fought on the side of the Communist revolutionaries (they didn't, trying as best they could to keep free of all fronts); that the subsequent liquidation of the "Kulaks" merely meant the end of an exploitative class of "capitalist farmers" (they weren't the large land-owning class but the "middle peasantry", and the elimination of some 5 million peasant households reduced Russia from its front position in European agricultural production to a poverty-stricken countryside).

And when the going gets rough—Stalin's purge trials, the growing network of the Gulag Archipelago—the TV-film historians, always on the lookout for a black-and-white formula to match a bit of dramatic black-and-white footage, abandon one set of clichés and turn to another. Finally, all the inhumane disasters of Soviet history are wildly put down to "the heritage of old bloody barbaric Russia. . . ."

Russian history may well have its wonted Churchillian riddles, mysteries and enigmas, but their unravelling is badly served by our prevailing mass-media mixture of "a little knowledge" (always a dangerous point of departure) and a lot of wilful mindless gullibility.

NOR IS THIS mishmash a simple special case of popular distortion. The new gobbledygook can also be found in scholarly works, as if nonsense becomes more palatable if seasoned by footnotes and bibliography. I have been reading the new edition of Merle Fainsod's classic study of Soviet totalitarianism, recently published by the Harvard University Press and as "edited" (actually extensively rewritten) by Jerry F. Hough;[3] and what is striking is that nowadays nothing is left of the old sense of mystery, or enigma, or paradox—we know everything in transparent clarity, we have finally comprehended the nature of the system. All the old difficulties seem to have disappeared. What Kenneth Burke used to call "exorcism by misnomer" runs wild here. Hough sees in the new Soviet governing circles "the combination of conservative style and moderate liberalism." As under some Slavic Harding and Coolidge there has been a "Return to Normalcy" (ch. 7). "Pluralism" is emerging and flowering, as "far-reaching dissent may be tolerated" and commissars now "freely acknowledge diversity of interests." Indeed, "the network of institutions to which a citizen can complain or appeal is extremely large—larger than in a

[2] See: M. J. Lasky, "Maxim Gorky: The Shame and the Glory", ENCOUNTER, March 1972.

[3] *How the Soviet Union Is Governed*. By JERRY F. HOUGH and MERLE FAINSOD. Harvard University Press, $18.50, £12.95.

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western country. . . ." (p. 316). All in all (as is suggested on p. 555),

> "unwritten constitutional restraints of the type found in Great Britain are slowly beginning to develop in the Soviet Union."

If Jerry Hough can believe that he can believe anything, and evidently he does. In such an onset of benevolent gullibility Stalin emerges again in all his old wonted far-sightedness. Stalin is quoted as saying in the year 1931:

> "We lag from the advanced countries by 50 to 100 years. We must make up this distance in 10 years. Either we do this or they crush us."

Our author then notes:

> "Hitler's attack came ten years and three months after this speech, and many who questioned the pace of industrial development must have wondered whether the outcome would have been the same with a slower rate of industrial growth—and, therefore, without something like collectivization. . . ."

The "three months" is, after all, an excusable margin of error. As for the other margins of error, these are glossed over with nice non-statistical vagueness. The Stalinist methods of "catching up" and "national strength" resulted in a "substantial" decline in grain and livestock; and, he is forced to concede, "the human costs of collectivization were also extremely high. . . ." (p. 151).

> "*Many* peasants died during the formation of the kolkhozes, and others were sent to camps or to exile in Siberia or the north where *a number* failed to survive." (Italics added.)

The far-sighted Stalin saw it all so clearly; too bad it never occurred to him that all those perished peasants might have made good living soldiers, and whole armies could have been better fed by all those missing animals and foodstuffs.

But why rake over old arguments? What matters is now, and "the Brezhnev era", we are instructed, "would be best understood if we ascribed to the General Secretary the type of motivations that we attribute to most politicians in the West. . . ." We are, then, not so very far from those putatively enlightened days when Westerners were delighted to find in Joseph Stalin "a wily politician who could well grace a seat in our US Senate" (Cordell Hull), or, at the very least (Averell Harriman), "a strong party political boss who could run a Tammany machine like Mayor Hague. . . ."

I HOPE I DO NOT SEEM to be indulging in easy bouts of second-guessing, for I am genuinely puzzled by the repetitive patterns of ignorance in our 20th-century political opinion-making. Surely the grotesque misunderstandings and their endless variations cannot be due simply to some innocent unawareness of a few obvious and elementary facts. Think of all those generations of Ideological Pilgrims and Ideological Dupes (those malefic types so clinically described by Paul Hollander and George Watson in memorable articles which, alas, re-pay re-reading every five years or so).[4] I suspect it would be the pathos of a rationalistic fallacy to feel that they might have caught sight of more reality, and spared themselves much subsequent anguish and breast-beating, had they tried to look at things a bit more sharply and to ponder them just a shade more reflectively.

Writing of her visit to Mao's China in these pages, Barbara Wootton (ENCOUNTER, June 1973) confessed:

> ". . . to anyone coming from a world which threatens to strangle itself in its own complications it is the apparent simplicity of Chinese life which makes an irresistible appeal."

Surely it is an appeal that should be resisted, if for no other reason than that the apparent simplicity—why should it be otherwise?—is a snare and a delusion and always hides (as Lady Wootton now knows) grievous problems of real complexity. Similarly, when Mme de Beauvoir travelled through Maoist China, she was quick to observe:

> "What is so winning about the Chinese leaders is that not one of them plays a part; they are dressed like anyone else . . . their faces are just faces, plainly and wholly human. . . . Their visage manifests an uncommon personality. . . . They inspire respect."

Those plain and human faces only disguised, as we now know, "lustful and criminal love of power" (at least among the Gang of Four), "fear of being arrested, purged, tortured, eliminated" (at least in the circles of the late Comrades Lin and Liu and the imprisoned Comrade Teng).

No, I am afraid it is not merely simple-mindedness that is culpable. Nor is it, at the other extreme, a sinister propaganda plot to enlist the foolish and the gullible in some devious Operation Whitewash. The one decisive factor which must impress itself on any observer of these unedifying intellectual tergiversations in our time is *the will to believe* or, more accurately, *the will to be deceived.* Somewhere among all our endowed natural instincts, between (say) primordial curiosity and the so-called death-wish, there is a deep-seated desire to be gulled, hoaxed, hoodwinked, or otherwise cozened and cheated. Our species loves the specious. Dark corners of the psyche long for the

[4] See: Paul Hollander, "The Ideological Pilgrim: Looking for Utopia, Then & Now", ENCOUNTER, November 1973; George Watson, "Were the Intellectuals Duped? The 1930s Revisited", ENCOUNTER, December 1973.

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fraudulent. Bamboozlement is part of *la condition humaine*.

"What was it in 1972", writes one Anglo-American historian who has just returned from his second visit to China, "that made visitors like myself so easy to gull?" Jonathan Mirsky saw everybody and everything, and came back seven years ago full of praise for the magnificent Cultural Revolution, offering as eloquent proof "the repeated assertions by famous intellectuals with whom I was often in private, that they had never had it so good." But: "many of them now reveal they had been exiled, disgraced, and humiliated; each can offer examples of beatings, killings, and suicides. . . ."

Had they simply been lying? and why couldn't he see through (at least a little bit) the dissimulation? Some told him frankly: "We deceived you." Others explained: "We couldn't dare to tell you the whole truth." But couldn't he, a trained observer and student of affairs, have glimpsed a portion of the true reality all by himself? As Mirsky himself wonders (in *The Observer*, 28 October 1979, p. 9).

> "It cannot be wholly simple to hoodwink Chinese-speaking specialists in the country for five weeks, who peer closely at everything and, notebooks open, interrogate their hosts about the size of their salaries and the nature of their pre-marital sex lives."

One leading Chinese Communist now provided him with "the simple answer."

> "*We* wanted to deceive you. But *you* wanted to be deceived."

Our ideological pilgrim and dupe conceded that he had somehow "sheathed" his "critical faculties" and "helped to insert the rings in our own noses."

ONE LAST CASE in our law of self-deception, for in these days of ideological illusionism we must be serious about the spurious.

Why should I ever have been sceptical of the many-splendoured messages which the charming and beautiful Mme Han Suyin brought back to us from her Chinese homeland? She was no outside tourist; she *belonged*; she *knew*. She had cousins who taught physics at Peking University; she had uncles who were distinguished painters; her very own family and relations kept her informed about art and science and all the other facets of the happy new social order being constructed under Chairman Mao. Here, evidently, was (in David Riesman's phrase) an authentic "inside-dopester." She wrote histories, biographies, novels. And I didn't believe a word of them.

Then, even for Han Suyin, came the moment of truth, the day of rude awakening.[5] The painter Huang Yung-yu had not simply "gone away somewhere" when he could no longer be found in his Peking studio. He and his family had been evicted, spent years in prison, for like Lin Feng-mien and Li Ke-jan and Kuan Shan-yue, he had been blacklisted as a "capitalist-roader." Her cousin, the physicist, now tells not of "some research complications" but of a wholesale purge of the scientists with the closing of their laboratories and the destruction of their files and documents. Her cousin, the musician, had liked Beethoven, a decadent taste; he had not just been "lost sight of" but had now "emerged from jail after three years."

Why, she cries, "but why did you not tell me what was happening since 1974, when I was in China in 1974 and 1975?"

Her family and friends replied: "We were frightened."

> "Such was the fear, the terror, that Chiang had managed to inspire.
>
> Nobody trusted anyone else, not even one's own family. . . . All the young children had been told to report anyone who spoke ill of Chiang Ching [Mme Mao Tse-tung].
>
> My family's reticence I can now understand.
>
> 'We knew that you would denounce her if you knew these things, and then we would all have gone to jail, or worse.'
>
> They tell me now."

Only one source of puzzlement remains—how so sensitive an observer, a novelist of powerful human passions, a native-speaker of Chinese attuned to words and inflections, should have remained so stolidly oblivious to such fearful emotions, to such anxiety-ridden subterfuges on all those "plain and wholly human faces." Can their reticence excuse her hardness of hearing?

Well, "they tell me now", and now it can be told.

[5] See: Han Suyin, "Fallen Woman: the File on Mrs Mao", *Radio Times* (BBC, 14 April 1977), pp. 10–11.

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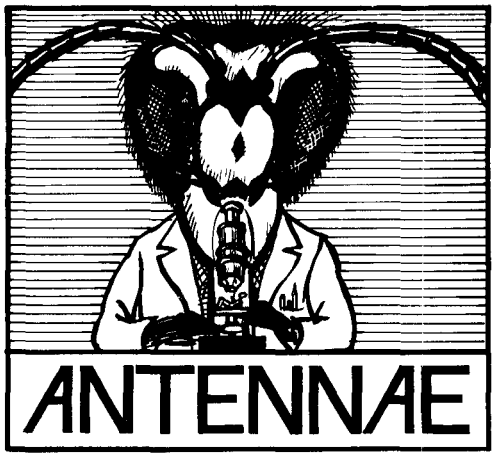

Holes in Time

By John Gribbin

THE IDEA OF "the black hole" as a hole in space, now reinforced by the new Walt Disney film and book-of-the-film, *The Black Hole*—subtitled *A Journey That Begins Where Everything Ends*—has entered popular mythology. The concept probably ranks with Newton's mythical falling apple and Einstein's equation $E = mc^2$ as a bit of science known to everyone who can read. But, as with gravity and relativity, knowledge of the *existence* of a concept does not extend to an *understanding* of what it all means.[1] And the most intriguing fact about the black hole may not be that it is a hole in space at all; for each and every black hole should be seen also as a hole in time.

This is a result of the essential unity of space and time, a concept which lies at the very heart of the Einsteinian revolution in our view of the Universe. Einstein's work tells us two things of equal importance: that mass and energy are interchangeable, two sides of the same coin, linked by the famous quoted equation; and that space and time are also two aspects of one whole, the continuum of space-time. So we have two components which make up the Universe, each in its turn two-faced—mass-energy and space-time. The interaction between the two, through gravity, accounts for phenomena as diverse as the existence of an expanding Universe; the bending of light from a distant star as it passes near the Sun; and the bizarre properties of black holes, including their ability to distort time.

Just what is a black hole? Over the past ten years or so, many people have offered their own hand-waving explanations; but the simplest and most easily understood is probably the oldest. This involves imagining our three-dimensional Universe (three-dimensional in space, of course; four if you include time) as compressed into an elastic, two-dimensional sheet of stretched material (it happens that the whole Universe is expanding—the rubber sheet is stretching—although that is of no relevance to the present discussion). Stars and galaxies are then imagined as spots on the two-dimensional fabric.

We can simulate the effect of matter (mass-energy) on the fabric of the Universe (space-time) by dropping small weights on to the rubber sheet, not just in imagination but even in a practical demonstration, where the weights could be marbles or ball-bearings. Each weight makes a dent in the sheet. It "distorts the fabric of space-time", in a manner very similar to the distortions in space-time produced by the presence of mass-energy in the real Universe.

A small weight distorts the fabric only slightly, as does a large weight spread over a large area. But a large weight concentrated on a small area produces a big distortion, with a sharply dipping curve to the sheet. The amount of curvature on the sheet corresponds to the strength of the gravitational field in real life. A massive, compact star distorts space-time nearby much more than a diffuse object; and this distortion of space-time is what we call gravity.

EXTENDING THE ANALOGY further, once we have a stretched rubber sheet with different weights sitting on it and producing little valleys, we can simulate the behaviour of light beams by rolling marbles across the sheet. Light, we know, travels in straight lines. What that means, Einstein said, is that light rays follow a path of least resistance through space-time, a geodesic. And whereas a marble rolled across a flat sheet does travel in a straight line, if it rolls into the valley created by a weight on the sheet its track is curved slightly and it rolls out at a different angle.[2] This is a precise analogy of the way in which the Sun's gravity "bends" light rays passing near it, and of the way the same gravity "holds" planets in orbit around the Sun, or the Moon in orbit around the Earth. In curved space-time, the line of least resistance is also curved, and we see the Moon staying in orbit not because some mysterious force (gravity) acts across empty space, but because there is *no* force acting to deflect it from "the path of least resistance" through curved space-time.

[1] Einstein's work has been amply described in "popular" works over the years. A flurry of books and articles marked his centenary in 1979: the best is probably Banesh Hoffman and Helen Dukas, *Einstein* (Paladin, 1977).

[2] This was the idea behind the prediction that light from distant stars, "bent" by the Sun, would measurably shift the star images recorded during an eclipse. The success of the 1919 eclipse expeditions in observing this effect made Einstein a household name.

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SUCH A POWERFUL NEW VISION of the Universe clears up the puzzle of how force is transmitted across "empty space", and it has had many triumphs which need not be elaborated here. But what happens if we push the situation to extremes? If we put a very heavy, very compact weight on to our rubber sheet, the sheet will stretch down until it snaps; the weight falls through, and we are left with a hole. And this is, indeed, one way of explaining the occurrence of holes in space—"black holes."

Rather than literally tearing the fabric of space-time apart, however, a black hole is better seen as pinching off a segment of space-time. If the sheet in our model is infinitely elastic, it will not tear, no matter how heavy the weight, but will stretch down forever into a bottomless pit. Anything coming too near the pit will fall in. Particles, or light rays, passing a little further away will be swung around as they follow the curve of least resistance; but they can escape again. Nothing, however, can ever climb out of the pit itself, infinitely deep with vertical walls.

This is the two-dimensional analogy of a black hole, which gets its name because not even light can escape from its interior around the extreme curvature, produced by an excessive concentration of matter in a small volume of space-time. How much is "excessive"? The sting in the tail of the story is that as little matter as twice the mass of our Sun, concentrated in the volume of a star, would collapse the fabric of space-time around itself to make a black hole.

BRIGHTLY SHINING STARS can resist this collapse, as long as they continue to shine brightly, because the energy released from nuclear reactions deep in their interiors balances the inward gravitational force.

But no star can shine brightly forever, since its nuclear fuel is inevitably exhausted after a few thousand million years. And then, for those stars with remaining mass more than twice the solar mass, collapse is inevitable. There are so many stars much more massive than our Sun that, unless there is some great and undiscovered flaw in Einstein's equations, there must be many black holes around us. And that is just in our Milky Way Galaxy, an island in space made up of a few thousand million stars. Across the reaches of the Universe there are many other galaxies, some bigger and some smaller, plus violently energetic objects such as quasars, where the energy equivalent to a galaxy of stars seems to come from a tiny volume.

This must mean that there are much greater concentrations of matter than even a large star; and it is widely accepted by astronomers now that the cores of galaxies are seats of violent activity involving a great deal of matter. Can they escape the black-hole fate? The answer must be no. After their outbursts they must settle down into truly huge black holes containing the mass-energy of thousands of millions of stars.

What happens to all that mass-energy, pinched off from the Universe? And where does the energy which drives the outbursts of quasars and energetic galaxies come from?

SO FAR, ALL THAT I have described is solid, mainstream science of impeccable pedigree.

The ideas of curved space-time, interconvertibility of mass and energy, and holes in space sound bizarre in terms of everyday life, chiefly because everyday life is not lived in a strong gravitational field. But they are as securely based and well accepted as the physical principles used in building a bridge or designing an internal combustion engine. This really is the way the Universe works, and while Einstein's theory may not be the last word, any better theory will have to *include* the proven successes of relativity theory within itself. In just the same way, relativity theory *includes* Newtonian mechanics, and does not replace the Newtonian equations which are so useful in everyday life. Indeed, Einstein's equations cancel down to the same as Newton's equations in weak gravitational fields. What could lie beyond relativity theory as now formulated, but still incorporate everything up to and including black holes?

Now we enter the realms of speculation at the frontiers of science today—but *informed* speculation. The temptation is to make a guess that "what goes in must come out" and that all of the mass-energy pouring into a black hole must get out somewhere else, bursting forth into the Universe again as, if you like, a "*white* hole."[3] Suppose that the bottomless pit produced by an excessive weight on our rubber sheet is not bottomless after all, but bent around on itself to join up with the sheet again in another place, like a tube tunnel or worm-hole. Throw mass-energy in one end and, perhaps, it will come out again at the other.

In many ways, this provides a much neater picture. And it is possible to describe the behaviour of such worm-holes through the fabric of space-time mathematically, although there is no satisfactory mathematical description—yet—of how such a tunnel could maintain its stability and avoid getting pinched off into two bottomless pits.

BUT THE IMPLICATIONS are intriguing, to say the least. For remember that our stretched sheet represents not just space but space-time. If the two

[3] See John Taylor, *Black Holes* (Avon and Fontana, 1975) or my book *White Holes* (Paladin, 1977).

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ends of the tunnel are located in different places, they are also located in different times, and if you throw matter in one end it emerges not just some*where* else but some*when* else as well! And it may not even emerge in "our" Universe. Imagine a whole series of stretched sheets, side by side but not touching, with stretched out "tunnels" of the sheet material joining them. Could a black hole in our Universe be connected to a white hole in another universe? Could the energy of quasars be driven from the collapsing matter of black holes in other universes? At this point, the mind begins to boggle. It sounds like "science fiction." But in fact, as usual, the speculations of scientists groping towards a new picture of the Universe are more mind-boggling than those of the science-fiction writers, who largely draw on imaginations rooted in "common sense", while science has, at the frontiers, long left common sense behind.

WHITE HOLES, if real, have implications that are a whole story in themselves. But there are two other ways in which black holes distort time, both direct consequences of relativity theory and therefore more respectable than speculations about white holes.

The first effect is again a simple consequence of the unity of space and time. A compact massive object—a black hole—distorts space-time, not just space. The effect is that the more space-time is curved the slower time passes in the region of curvature. Clocks near a black hole will run slow. This effect, too, is just an extreme extension of an effect which has now been directly measured, using studies of the changes in the spectral lines of light emerging from the surfaces of stars and the Sun, where gravity is stronger than on Earth but still much weaker than near a black hole. This fact cannot be over-emphasised.

To a non-scientist, a "theory" may mean a wild idea rather than a proven fact. So "relativity theory" is sometimes imagined as the wild speculation of Einstein, "just a theory" and not proven. In science, though, a theory is an explanation of some part of the workings of the Universe which *does* give a proven, reliable description of reality. Einstein's theory of the bending of space-time by mass-energy is proven by many experiments; and there is no doubt at all that where space-time is bent—where gravity is strong—time is slowed down. So a black hole immediately provides us with a one-way machine for travel into the future.

If we had a handy black hole within range of the Solar System, we could travel into the future using our present-day space technology. Take one courageous astronaut, put him into a rocket ship and send him off to orbit once close around the hole, without quite going close enough to get sucked in. While he is passing through the region of distorted space-time, it will seem to him as if everything in the outside Universe is speeded up. He will detect nothing odd inside his spacecraft, provided he avoids the dangerous tides produced by the gravity of the hole; but he will emerge to find that outside time has passed more rapidly than it has for him. With a big enough black hole and a strong enough distortion of space-time, this would provide a one-way ticket to any time in the future—next week, next year, a million years from now, or after the Sun has died.

THE PROBLEM IS, if our intrepid traveller finds he doesn't like the future, there is no way for him to get back. This is strictly one-way time-travel; and the much more intriguing version would involve travel forwards and backwards in time. In H. G. Wells' classic tale, it isn't the travel *into* the future that is important in itself, but the ability of the fictional traveller to *come back* and recount his experiences to his friends.

TRUE TIME-TRAVEL, however, runs into some philosophical difficulties, quite apart from the mechanical possibilities or impossibilities. Given a true time-machine, causality can become hopelessly confused—effects can happen before their causes, and certain paradoxes arise. In science fiction, variations on the theme are common. A man invents a time-machine, goes back into the past and kills his grandfather; so his father is never born, he is never born, the time machine is never invented, and grandfather survives. In which case the inventor *is* born ... and so on. Much more subtle variations on the theme, on every scale from the human to the cosmic, can be imagined. And the paradoxical implications lead many people among those who ponder on the nature of the Universe to feel that nature must impose a kind of cosmic censorship which makes time travel impossible. Once allow causality violation and you open the door to all kinds of weird phenomena—precognition and telepathy being among the simplest. I am not sure how valid this philosophising is. The argument seems to be that the implications of time travel are so bizarre as to be unthinkable. But is this any different, really, from saying that the bending of space-time near a massive body is too bizarre to be real? Yet the bending of space-time is already established, like it or not, as a facet of the real world.[4]

[4] The "philosophers" who have looked most deeply into the implications of causality violation are usually known as science fiction writers. Robert Heinlein's "All You Zombies", in *The Best of Robert Heinlein* (Sphere, 1973), David Gerrold's *The Man Who Folded Himself* (Faber, 1973) and Keith Laumer's *Dinosaur Beach* (Daw, New York, 1971) are good examples of the genre.

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So what do the equations tell us about travel backwards in time? They certainly do *not* rule it out, and one particular form of hole in time could send our hero backwards or forwards, as well as across space. Here, though, a variation on the cosmic censorship notion may really come into play. For the equations which tell us time-travel might be truly possible also tell us that it would be impossible to decide in advance just where, and when, you would emerge from the hole. You could never go back to kill your own grandfather, because the hole would throw you out at random—*perhaps* in London 50 years ago, but with no greater chance of that than of emerging at any other point in space-time, anywhere in the Universe and anywhen, past or future, in the life of the Universe.

THIS REMARKABLE POSSIBILITY, perhaps the most bizarre revelation of relativity theory so far, is linked to the presence of rotating black holes.

All of my examples so far have come from simple, non-rotating black holes which sit in space sucking matter into their bottomless pits. These distort space-time drastically by any everyday standard. But a rotating black hole adds an extra factor to the distortion, twisting space-time around as well as bending it inward towards the hole. In fact, any naturally occurring black hole must be rotating. No star is completely motionless in space, and when a star—or anything else—collapses, its rate of rotation speeds up (not unlike an ice-skater whose arms are tucked into the body) to conserve the angular momentum of the system. The smaller it gets the faster it spins; and in physical terms the rotation effectively distorts space-time in such a way that it opens up gateways to elsewhere and elsewhen.

Without ever being crushed inside the hole and sinking into a bottomless pit of space-time, a traveller could in principle pass close enough to a rotating black hole to be hurled into another part of the Universe. But diving back into the space-time whirlpool would not enable the traveller to retrace his path and return to where, and when, he started. Once set off on such a journey, and you would be committed to wander through space and time like a cosmic Flying Dutchman—an exciting prospect perhaps, but frustratingly with no means of "returning to Go." But there, perhaps, is nature's own safety-valve to avoid causality violation.

HOW SERIOUSLY should these speculations be taken? Let me put it this way. The equations of General Relativity provide the best description of the Universe that we have; those equations say that distortions of space-time produced by rotating black holes make time travel, to any point of space-time, possible. The idea can only be killed off by a better theory which incorporates all of the proven successes of relativity theory and goes further to provide a basis for the cosmic censorship idea.

And there is one final mind-boggling idea to ponder on. In 1949 the great mathematician Kurt Gödel[5] worked out solutions to Einstein's equations which describe the behaviour of a rotating Universe. Now, the Universe as we know it seems to have been created in a great outburst some 20,000 million years ago, the "Big Bang" in which both mass-energy and space-time were created. This event, involving outburst from a mathematical point, or singularity, bears more than a passing resemblance to an explosion from a black-hole state (or, as I have used the term above, a white hole). A rotating Big Bang universe is described mathematically by the same equations that describe the behaviour of space-time near a rotating black hole singularity, including the possibility of travel into the past by following a path through distorted space-time.

Our own universe does not seem to be rotating; or, at least, not very much. Gödel's solutions to Einstein's equations are generally regarded as a mathematical quirk, rather like the fact that although the square root of 4 can be either +2 or −2, in real life we ignore the "negative root." If our Universe *is* like a Gödel universe, it would be possible, though not necessarily easy, to travel back into your own past.

And there is no reason, except emotion and instinct, to dismiss the possibility. If you do feel emotionally driven to reject the idea, and assuming you haven't developed a post-Einsteinian theory, then you may well be in just the same category as those people who, on emotional grounds, dismiss the idea that the Earth is round since—"of course"—if it were, our Australian friends would fall off. My own belief is that there is much more to the Universe than common sense can ever account for, and that holes in time really do exist. Science fact is now, as ever, far more intricate than science fiction. It is more subtle, more imaginative and, at the frontiers of our knowledge, more incredible and unlikely than anything that fits into our everyday picture of common sense.

[5] I have elaborated on the implications of "the Gödel Universe" in *Timewarps* (Dent, 1979); the work is also discussed by Dr Paul Davies in *New Scientist* (26 January 1978, p. 239).

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DISCUSSION

The Music of Despair

By Richard Mayne

MY FIRST, UNWORTHY, REACTION to Robert Sinai's article on *What Ails Us and Why* was that it must be a hoax. His potted biography was as unspecific as his piece: it recalled the spoof cast-list in Anthony Shaffer's play *Sleuth*. Born in "Eastern Europe", lectured at "various American universities", author of books about "Modernization", "Decadence", "The Modern World." I suppose there *are* academics who go about haranguing us on such windy subjects, like the prophets of old. Audiences notoriously like being scolded. But could the name really be "Sinai" rather than "Conquest", "Koestler", or "Barzun"? Was his contribution [April 1979] a fragment from the Tablets of the Law—or simply an advance glimpse of The Threatened rather than the Promised Land? I wondered who was having us on. Could it be a pseudonym for Ferdinand Mount?

A second reaction, reading the piece, was Yes, yes—or even yum, yum. Our technology *has* outstripped our sense; growth *has* imposed strain on resources, the environment, and our own personalities; over-population *is* a danger; democracy *can* breed mediocrity; bureaucracy *can* stifle initiative; mass civilisation *does* include much pap; current art and literature *do* reflect disorientation; and cultures *do* have their day. To hear so much denounced so trenchantly was exhilarating, even seductive. Too right: it's all going down the tubes.

Then, after wallowing, I began to think. That involved remembering how much of all this I had read—and even written—before. Sinai recalls Carlyle: his strictures recall Coleridge. More recently, nearly all his charges against our misuse of our opportunities have been taken up not only by writers, but even by bureaucracies themselves. The European Community—to take an example from close at hand—has itself launched programmes to mitigate some of the evils Mr Sinai denounces. As for his fears about "our" civilisation, he himself alludes to both Spengler and Toynbee. There seems little new in what he now says.

That need not mean, of course, that the message is untrue or irrelevant. To judge everything by its novelty value may be a symptom of the putative disease. So let us take some of Mr Sinai's assertions, and see how they stand up against some facts.

THE FIRST ODDITY is a metaphor: the notion of "a sick civilisation." Like most metaphors, this is beguiling: it can accommodate the coexistence of both healthy and ill members within the same society, which in overall terms may still be "sick." But what does the metaphor mean? That some ways of behaving or organising affairs, some kinds of building or transportation, some forms of communication, even, are *diseased*? The notion is so deep-seated that it takes an effort to realise that it *is* merely a metaphor, not a statement of clinically observable fact. If our civilisation is "sick", then the phrase could surely be applied to other forms of society. Yet as soon as we formulate such phrases as "a sick golf-club" or "a sick women's institute" we show up the metaphor for what it is: a metaphor, and no more.

As evidence of "sickness", Mr Sinai suggests that noise levels, the pace of work and the intensity of artificial lighting may be "triggering instincts of devastation." This sounds plausible: I could well imagine flailing out at the neon lighting if I were forced to work in an automobile factory. But the fact is: people don't. The crime and violence we all deplore is most frequently the work of *unemployed* aggressors—either victims or layabouts. The hard-pressed executive or chargehand has no time or energy to be destructive: nor has he much incentive.

This leads to another of Sinai's assertions: that "the insatiable desires of modern man have become an unending torture." Less a torture, I should say, than that suffered by the 19th-century urban poor. The technology that Sinai deplores has greatly improved the lot of millions of people; and while colour television, family cars, frozen food, and St Michael clothing may not equal Mozart as a spiritual experience, they are hardly to be sneezed at, or sneered at. Similarly, while many modestly endowed people may now be admitted to higher education, is this to be decried? Only if it actually drags down academic standards; and a few sociology or other "soft" degrees seem a small price to pay for a population better educated all round. If a "torture" of this sort exists, it seems more likely to afflict television viewers in black ghettos who see an impossibly luxurious life-style paraded as the norm.

AGAIN, SINAI'S DESCRIPTION of feeling "lost in a crowd" is psychologically telling: it says a great deal about how many people feel. But does it say

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anything about actual behaviour? Lost he may be: "made uniform" he need not be—some would say cannot be. And simply knowing that there are many more university-educated suburbanite desk-workers around is no reason for becoming "more weak, more narrow-minded and dependent."

> "As men grow more alike [Sinai claims] each man feels himself feebler than all the rest."

A fine rhetorical epigram. But not necessarily true. And is it really so that the average man "crushes beneath him everything that is different, everything that is excellent, individual, qualified, and select"? The last word is in any event a give-away. Is it excellence that's in question, or social exclusiveness? Has authority really decayed, or have the emperor's clothes been exposed? In music—even in pop music, *pace* Sinai—quality still shows. So it does in medicine, engineering, physics, biochemistry, and seamanship. Perhaps it even shows in business and politics too.

But with politics we come back to the old lament: they don't make great men the way Mother used to. "A system devised by geniuses is now run by nonentities." If it's Carter against Jefferson, maybe so. But Callaghan or Thatcher against Campbell-Bannerman? Giscard against Michel Debré, author of France's present constitution? Helmut Schmidt against Konrad Adenauer—or whom?

AND FINALLY, OF COURSE, the collapse of civilisation as we know it.

> "Each civilisation makes some fatal mistake in the end and perishes."

This, surely, is Toynbee's Fall-of-the-House-of-Usher view of history. Read more closely, it looks different. "Civilisations" are the names we apply to relatively heterogeneous periods or areas of the heaving mass which is the past. They change, replace each other, rarely in a singular violent cataclysm, more often by a process of part-absorption, part-influence, part counter-reaction. Bits of one "civilisation"—words, languages, buildings, dress, beliefs, ways of thought, unconscious habits—survive in the context of another. But most "civilisations" are changing all the time anyway. When the pace of change becomes too rapid, we hear talk of decadence or disaster.

One such change, in the present world, Sinai does not discuss. To me, nevertheless, it seems at least as fundamental as any of the others. This is the fact that, outside Europe and North America, many more millions have expectations, passion, and guns. "The West", to use a misnomer, has long been privileged and outnumbered: now it threatens to be outmatched. This is the real challenge.

Can we persuade the eager and angry millions around us to satisfy their wants peacefully? Can we enlist them on the side of the values we cherish? Can we keep our technological lead? Can we maintain our own standard of living as theirs rises? Can we preserve our own civilised virtues in a world that seems to threaten them? Can we, in the last resort and if need be, defend our territory and ourselves?

These are the questions that really disquiet me; and our abilities in all these respects are certainly lessened if we lose our own self-confidence. If we fail, we may face a new Dark Age. To the old Dark Ages, two responses made sense: one was to batten down the hatches, like the monks copying manuscripts, in the hope that something of what we cherish would survive. The other was to stand up and fight. Perhaps, today, we should be prepared to do both. But we're in no way helped by prophets of inevitable decadence—by what Graham Greene once called "the eternal and alluring taint of the Manichee, with its simple and terrible explanation of our plight, how the world was made by Satan and not by God, lulling us with the music of despair. . . ."

"What Ails Us, & Why"

By Kenneth Minogue

PROFESSOR SINAI has provided us with a splendid diatribe against the modern world. The object of his attack is mass civilisation, and I hope that it will do its work by reinforcing in us, as he no doubt intends, all those resolutions which embolden us to stand out against the cheapness of modernity. But as a speculation on the course of history, his argument is weak. The main reason for this is that Professor Sinai has not made up his mind whether he is a scientist or a moralist. The scientist tells us we are in the midst of a systemic breakdown, while the moralist tells us that we have been corrupted by pride, self-intoxication, and self-deception. But these are moral vices, fully within our capacity to change if only some Cassandra, Jeremiah, or Sinai should sufficiently awaken our capacity for virtue. Being vices, these bad things cannot be the inhabitants of a system in which abstractions unfold themselves according to some "iron law of decadence."

Professor Sinai's diagnosis is familiar, and plausible: we are being proletarianised. It is indeed true that increasing numbers of people are beginning to play a part in directing an economic system

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about whose workings they are patently ignorant. And whereas every earlier set of barbaric outsiders who forced their way into the centres of civilisation either had a decent respect for what they had invaded, or else very quickly proved, like the Mongols, to be an evanescent irruption, the modern barbarian hordes are within, and have been persuaded that they are the salvation rather than the damnation of the system. It is the case, however, that within a generation of the Russian revolution, the presses began to print manuals on good manners; and the press began to encourage rather more civil behaviour on the part of the citizenry. Civilisation is easily toppled, but it does have a certain resilience. It is worth reminding ourselves that European civilisation was born with a sense that it had fallen from some earlier Golden Age or Garden of Eden. And towards the end of the Roman Empire, we find dominating the writers of the time just such a mood as is widely prevalent today. The earth no longer gives forth such abundant harvests, complained St Cyprian, and the mines yield less silver, as if the very earth itself were exhausted. It might well be a modern environmentalist speaking as he marches off to join the Club of Rome.

IT IS TRUE, INDEED, that Rome did fall, and Europe suffered centuries of barbarous instability. It is also true that *our* barbarians are clever little monkeys with easy access to frightful weapons. It is also true that their main object is so to ossify modern society that the income and benefits they seek may be reliably guaranteed them in perpetuity. Barbarism has never before been so devastatingly fused with rigidity. But one man's rise is another man's fall. Falling Rome in the West passed Rising Christianity with a wry salute somewhere around the 5th century. It must be admitted, of course, that some nasty and totally destructive natural disaster like a nuclear holocaust could utterly destroy us all; but that is not the same thing as the fall of a civilisation.

Short of a dead planet, it is hard to see what the fall of our civilisation would be. Writing in Great Britain, it is easy to confuse parochial troubles with the decline of the West; or perhaps the troubles of Europe, or the English-speaking world. But the modern world is such that it is very difficult to distinguish one civilisation from another. The whole idea of a "civilisation" no longer seems to be the appropriate unit by which we may measure the vitalities of different parts of the globe at different times.

"The superficially revolutionary character of our times", Professor Sinai writes in one of his more striking sentences, "only hides a dreary expanse of stagnation." But we do have over the Dark Ages one striking advantage: the availability of a vast range of past culture. It has been the practice of our civilisation to revivify itself by frequent raids on the past, and so long as we are not cut off from that, then obituaries are premature—indeed, "exaggerated", as the joke has it.

AND THIS BRINGS US BACK to the reason why we cannot be suffering from a systemic breakdown. Systems are inhabited by abstractions, while actual human beings live and work in the world, of which systems are but a part, and by no means the greatest part. What is going to happen to us all will depend on the beliefs that people get into their heads.

It is true that one can only wince and groan at the things people are in fact capable of believing, and the fearful destructive frenzies that have often resulted. There is plenty of room for gloomy forecasting, but there is no basis at all for thinking that we have any very clear understanding of where the escalator is taking us, or indeed that we are on an escalator at all.

One Cheer for Democracy

By Ronald Butt

"CHANGE AND DECAY in all around I see", sings Professor Sinai, though with a deep note of ultimate pessimism that smacks more of the woe of the Norns than the vision of the Christian hymn. It is not, on the face of it, easy to quarrel with his description of the scene around us.

The modern industrial system and the pursuit of growth *in the way in which we pursue it* (the qualification is important though Professor Sinai does not make it) *are* threatening our civilisation. The frustrations of urban life *do* produce such symptoms as the break-up of families, drug addiction, obscenity, and violent protest. We *are* paying a fearful price for our rejection of what he calls the classical and traditional concept of human nature and our preference for making desires sovereign instead of limiting them by reason. Quite plainly, democracy in the form we have it is not working well. In its obsession with the satisfaction of the present, democracy *does* tend to disregard both the past and the future. Undoubtedly, democracy, or something to do with it, *is* leading to a degenerating civilisation. (It is always tempting, when walking through aristocratic Kenwood, to meditate on the pleasure it gives to the 20th-century lower orders, and to wonder what the progressive Camden councillors would have built there had they been

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around in time to put up a people's palace on the spot.) It is also quite true that a "large segment" of the young now lives in a "throbbing sound culture" so that they do almost nothing in silence—and if it comes to that, it is hard to find any shop now that does not have the hideous noises that destroy concentration and make me forget what I went in for. Yes, there is, I think, decadence and decline and political failure. But the question is—what is Professor Sinai asking us to make of it?

He describes it as a "systemic" crisis, by which he means one in which a civilisation has collided with its own limits and is on the way to chaos and destruction. It happens to all civilisations in the end (he says); each "makes some fatal mistake and perishes." But if it is the fate of all civilisations, why should it disturb us intellectually (whatever the inconvenience to us personally), particularly if it is part of a natural process of death and rebirth? For what precisely does he mean by perish? Out of the decay of Rome came the much higher, more spiritual and humane aspirations of Christian Europe. (It is not a fashionable thing to say, but as a gesture towards the "stalwart candour" of which democracy tends to deprive us, according to Professor Sinai, I will venture to say that I would personally have preferred to live in the humane cultural excitement of Alfred the Great's Christian court than in the bread-and-circuses atmosphere of Imperial Rome. Except, of course, for the lack of hot water and heating.)

The trouble with Professor Sinai's analysis is that he does not reveal how much destruction he envisages in this particular crisis. If we are going up in the smoke of nuclear ruin, or are about to be wiped out by as yet distant barbarian hordes, this is serious and we should do something about it. (It may indeed be so.) But if the particular systemic crisis of the present is to be compared with, say, the French Revolution, then although this is not to be welcomed (at least, not by me) in its excesses, I suppose that at least it is the sort of systemic crisis which history tends to take in its stride. The trouble is that Professor Sinai does not tell us whether this systemic crisis is comparable to the fall of Rome, or the French Revolution, or is the ultimate catastrophe of the sort that by definition we have never experienced—in which case we have no experience to tell us whether the present symptoms portend it.

AT THE HEART OF Professor Sinai's analysis is his conviction that democracy is responsible for the vulgarisation of culture and the decline in political authority.

If, when he blames our cultural failings on the "elevation of the masses to arbiters of taste", he implies that the taste of most individuals in the mass is *naturally* bad, I disagree. Ordinary Viennese went to hear Mozart's music because the highest music was not divorced from the people. Composers from Bach to Beethoven made use of the folk music of their time. We may reasonably think that there is fundamental degeneracy in the "popular" music around us, but this is because the taste of ordinary people has not been left to develop naturally but has been exploited and manipulated by techniques of mass communication. The culture of the peasant is not, in pejorative terms, low in comparison with the high culture of the aristocrat; the naive moral truism of the ordinary working-class person is generally true but is now being "systematically" destroyed by cleverer people who turn morality upside-down. I might add that although much great art has been based on privilege and hierarchy, it was not the illiterate barons who fashioned the high culture of medieval Europe but poor clerks who came out of hovels, even though the barons might sometimes be its patrons. And if the modern graduate has only a "smattering" of learning, the same might have been said of the Oxford "blue" of better days.

HOWEVER, MY CENTRAL DIFFERENCE with Professor Sinai is over the implications of his apparent assumption that mass democracy tends to root out "men of the type who desire and can bear the burden of authority." This, together with the pandering to mass tastes, is (he thinks) an illustration of "the decline of authority which the democratic system makes inevitable." That we have experienced such a decline is true. That democracy must inevitably lead to such a decline is not proved.

I doubt how well the great leaders of the past (the neurotic Chatham, for instance) would have shaped had they been exposed to the media of our time and been obliged to shoulder responsibility for as much as a contemporary politician must. The truth is that the 18th-century magnate, with his clutch of rotten boroughs, had authority because the system was (broadly) accepted. Each age must find its own authority based on what people with decisive power can accept, and we now stand in need of just such an authority. The weakness of Professor Sinai's argument is that he does not make it clear whether he thinks our lost authority has gone for good and cannot be replaced.

I am not myself yet willing to write off the possibility of a genuine democracy of more responsible individuals that will make possible authority in a free society. The alternative (since authority in the long run is natural to the human community) is authority of a kind which neither Professor Sinai nor I will much like, and which will do little for our civilisation's high culture. We shall not repel that danger by looking around with gloomy satisfaction and appearing to proclaim deterministically that nothing can be done.

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Cheer Up, Professor!

By George Mikes

I READ Professor Sinai's interesting essay with growing envy. Dark, unalleviated and unmitigated gloom always makes me envious. I am painfully aware that I am not gloomy, despondent and atrabilious enough.

The article would have worried me a great deal if I were given to worrying. It would have made me despondent if I were given to despondency but, alas, I am not. This is no feeble attempt to be frivolous; it is a grave admission against myself. The fact that I am not one of the great writers of this age—perhaps of all ages—is not due to lack of talent, power of observation and expression. My lack of dazzling success is due to my damned pleasant and equable nature and to my (I apologise for the phrase) sunny temperament.

Great writers from Sophocles through Dostoevsky to Kafka and Koestler are all preoccupied with doom, disaster, ruin and evil. George Orwell predicted utter disaster for the West in 1984, and Spengler expected it much sooner. What chance has a man got who expects everything to turn out well and all disasters to have a happy ending? A man who while he does not think that we live in the best of all possible worlds is ready to accept almost everything as it comes, with a shrug of his shoulders? What insight can I gain into the depths of human soul when I have no depths, little soulfulness and have never been depressed in my life? What can I possibly understand about human suffering when I am always satisfied, or at least prepared to put up with my lot? I am like that man who, when thrown out of the window at the fortieth floor, fell past the twentieth and said to himself: "Nothing too bad has happened up to now—it will be all right. . . ."

Professor Sinai beats all other gloom-mongers hands down. Dostoevsky thought that life was sheer suffering but at least he enjoyed gambling. Kafka and Koestler see glimmers of light—Koestler, indeed, even prescribed a hopeful drug-cure for humanity. According to Sinai, however, life is ghastly and is getting ghastlier every day; it has not one single redeeming feature; mankind is marching forward to its inevitable self-destruction.

Professor Sinai has his own favourite gloom-merchants. Carlyle was expecting decay because of the "Age of Mechanism"; Kierkegaard spoke of "inescapable spiritual bankruptcy"; Burckhardt feared a new barbarism "visiting deathly weakness on the forces now apparently sustaining us. . . ."; Nietzsche forecast the inevitable approach of nihilism. "That's the stuff", I sigh, pale with envy. What chance do we simple and fairly cheerful souls have, forecasting a comfortable future and a chance of muddling through? Who will be impressed by our pointing out that all the "inevitable" doom has been safely and happily avoided?

THE SINAI PIECE is well written and full of magnificent phrases. Valéry made it clear, he says, that the abyss of history was deep enough to hold us all. By now nearly everybody accepts the possibility of "The End of the Modern World" (the title of a book by Romano Guardini, published in 1950). The fears of decline and breakdown have become the stuff of everyday reality.

If a few "good things" did turn up—i.e. developments we ordinary, less gloomy mortals thought advantageous and beneficial—they were all in truth disasters in disguise. Prosperity is not just something desirable which also has its dark sides: it is an utter disaster. "Abundance does not bring contentment. Where there is more and more of everything, things are worth less and less; and prosperity without precedent produces *only* increased ugliness, boredom and spiritual trouble without precedent." (My italics.) In my primitive and superficial way I thought that prosperity had a few redeeming features: less hunger, less suffering, quite a lot of colour in formerly completely colourless lives, a chance for better education, travel, leisure, less sickness and the disappearance of a few murderous diseases. But no. Abundance brings *only* ugliness, boredom, and troubles.

It is certainly laid on pretty thick. In one single paragraph Sinai speaks of, and forecasts, further industrial pollution, clamour, dust, fumes, congestion and virtual urban destruction, population explosion, overgrown cities which are bound to become uninhabitable, urban frustration causing restlessness and discontent, the break-up of families, mounting obscenity, freak cults, drug addiction, violent forms of protest, growing uniformity of life, plus a few more minor- and medium-sized disasters thrown in.

But no, I said to myself, nobody can be perfect, he must slip up at least once. He must see a glimpse of hope somewhere in something. I am not a Pangloss, and do not necessarily disagree with many of his assessments. All right, there will be disaster ahead, but *utter* disaster? *unmitigated* disaster? But I did not know my Sinai.

In 50 or 100 years, he thinks, the world will have exhausted all its reserves. It will be unable to feed its population, and it will face a holocaust of unimaginable proportions. The desires of modern man will constantly grow, and thus produce

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irrational dissatisfactions. "Never satisfied and forever seeking the unobtainable he is oppressed by inner confusions, the anxieties of insecurity and a profound unhappiness."

As for the spread of education for the so-called masses and the proliferation of universities, this is yet another catastrophe without any redeeming feature. "The universities now turn out hordes of graduates whose smattering of knowledge is a danger to themselves and society." The universities have become too numerous to keep a medieval level of excellence. Fools become professors, ignorant asses academicians, and they produce greater fools and greater asses. Here Sinai is in his stride and is carried away by the momentum created by his own eloquence:

> "*With a few exceptions* [the most far-reaching qualifications in the piece] the performance of the intellectuals during the last 50 years has been generally characterised by cowardice, opportunism, dishonesty and irresponsibility."

All of modern literature is worthless? art meaningless? the line between good and evil nonexistent? our culture only a milky TV screen?

FULL MARKS, Sinai, for gloom and despondency. Well done. Oppressive freedom is particularly good. I remain green with envy. But as I am what I am, not unlike our own execrable society, without the slightest hope of learning, improving, changing, I must exclaim: "Rubbish, Professor!" Isn't it probable that Sinai's gloom reflects more his own disposition than the real state of the world? Only self-deluding idiots, living in a fools' paradise, would dismiss all his arguments. But there is no shade without some light. Even the worst disasters have produced some—often unforeseen and unwanted—beneficial results. The unspeakable sufferings of the Crimean War produced . . . Florence Nightingale. The murders of Burke and Hare—who sold the corpses of their victims to universities—produced a change in public opinion and made autopsies legal. Or, to mention another crime: even Hitler's massacre of the Jews helped to establish the State of Israel.

This is the stuff of which true tragedies are made—Sophocles and Euripides knew all the paradoxes and the ironies. There is nothing new or revolutionary in it, nothing characteristic of our own age.

AND THIS IS THE MAIN TROUBLE with Professor Sinai's fathomless gloom. It is *vieux jeu*. The public should be grateful to Cassandra. But ancient hieroglyphics warned people of "grave dangers"; similar dangers still threaten us; yet here is humanity, still undestroyed. There were always more fools about than geniuses, more bad taste than good, more Harold Robbinses than Shakespeares, more illiterates than Goethes, more innumerates than Newtons.

The difference, compared with the past, is size and technology: that is all. The difference is essential, of course. Now humanity can destroy itself, vicious doctrines do travel faster, and machines are

The West Goes West

"THE decline of Western civilisation might well be at hand. It is in the interests of humanity that such a decline should take place. This would allow the differing segments of the human race to enjoy a more equitable share, not only of the resources of the planet, but also of the power to control its future."

SO SAYS *Prof. Ali Mazrui, described as Professor of Political Science at the University of Michigan, who is broadcasting this year's series of Reith Lectures. They go under the general title of "The African Condition" and are printed in the BBC's own weekly, "The Listener."*

Whether his lectures are the most confused and boring Reith Lectures ever given is a matter of dispute. There has been some pretty stiff competition. But the above passage shows a degree of mental confusion difficult even for Reith Lecturers to surpass.

IT MAY, JUST POSSIBLY, **be in the interests of humanity (whatever that may mean) that Western civilisation should decline. I think it is most unlikely. But it is certainly not in the interests of Prof. Ali Mazrui and his fellow verbalisers.**

WITHOUT *Western civilisation there would be no University of Michigan for him to be professor at; nor political science for him to be professor of; nor speedy means of transport to bring him to England to give Reith Lectures; nor electrical techniques of broadcasting to broadcast them to those who might wish to listen; nor printing apparatus to print his lectures in "The Listener"; nor means of distributing "The Listener" to those who might wish to read them.*

THE DECLINE **of Western civilisation would mean, in fact, the decline and disappearance of Prof. Ali Mazrui and his fellows; in itself no insupportable loss. But for what he calls the different segments of the human race it would mean, at any rate in the material terms of power and resources he is talking about, starvation, death and disaster beyond anything he or we can now imagine.**

Peter Simple
in the DAILY TELEGRAPH

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transforming our lives. But Professor Sinai says that *before* humanity destroys itself all our ideals will be devalued, fools and cowards will reign, and ignorant masses will dictate. There is no more evidence for that than was in Orwell's prophecy. 1984 is almost upon us, but the West is not some super-Stalinist dictatorship.

The professor may well be mistaken. It could be that humanity's future is not quite so hopeless. But if he is right, surely it is no great pity if that wicked, vicious, stupid, malevolent and worthless species is at long last wiped out.

Whatever the case, it looks pretty much all right. So cheer up, Sinai. Please cheer up.

A Reply

By I. Robert Sinai

DESPITE THE ATTEMPT at humour with which Richard Mayne opened the discussion it is obvious that we are all in basic agreement regarding the main elements of my diagnosis. Ronald Butt manages to raise one cheer for democracy, one down from E. M. Forster's two, and has a sentimental belief that "the naive moral truism of the ordinary working-class person is generally true." But surely Mr Butt must know that the "masses" in any society can by themselves produce nothing of significance and that they only exist as an historical entity if and when they are organised and educated by an effective ruling class. The quality of every society is determined by the quality of its leadership, that is, of its élite. It *was* Bach and Beethoven who made use of the folk music of their time, not some peasant music-maker. It is in fact the absolute extent of aptitude for leadership in a given society, or the qualities on which it is based, that determines the creativeness of its endeavours and the level of its civilisation. One need only compare the quality of the leadership evinced by the 19th century with that of the 20th century to be dramatically struck by the great gap.

Although Kenneth Minogue also appears to be in general agreement with my analysis, why does a sober, critical analysis of a society have to become a "diatribe", "splendid" though it may be? His contention, furthermore, that we have no very clear understanding of where the escalator of history is taking us, indeed that we are on an escalator at all, is an old chestnut which British academics, sunk in the narrow British empirical tradition, like to hurl at somebody when they have run out of ideas.

The fundamental difference that divides us is that I believe, on the basis of a comprehensive study of human psychology and history, that there are certain uniformities, regularities and even laws that inexorably govern every major culture-historical type or civilisation. Every civilisation is a system bound together by a network of causal relationships that is capable of converting a chaos of biological-psychological, social, political, economic and ideological traits into a cosmos. Every civilisation is also by its very nature finite, limited, filled with all kinds of neuroses, tensions and contradictions, and sooner or later, and in no fixed mechanical order or sequence of stages, exhausts its potentialities for growth and enters into a systemic crisis. Systemic crises can either be resolved through a revolutionary reconstruction of the whole society, in all its manifestations or, if no revolutionary alternative exists, the particular system will enter either a prolonged period of decay or witness the mutual destruction of the contending forces.

It is, I contend, more than obvious by now that the modern industrial system in all its forms has now entered such a systemic crisis. What is distinctive about this crisis, however, is that at present there exist no creative alternatives to the present order. Modern industrial society has produced no heirs. Socialism in all its forms is part of the disease, not its cure. The "counter-culture" which was supposed to represent a new consciousness and way of life has been absorbed by the very chaos which it merely reflected. The "post-Industrial society" is a pure fantasy. The wretched of the earth, armed though they may be, can inflict palpable injuries on the developed world, particularly through their use of the oil weapon, but are themselves only a peculiar amalgam of flimsy, primitive, tribal pseudo-states or schizophrenic, transitional and hybrid congeries, or old, exhausted, and petrified societies without the capacity for renewal. That the West has allowed these backward or degenerate countries to achieve the kind of prominence they have now attained is but another symptom of its loss of purpose and will, and of its decline.

THE PROSPECT BEFORE US, then, is not of some revolutionary challenge by some new, crude but vigorous counter-élite arising from within, nor is it the threat stemming from vital barbarian forces descending upon us from without, but the slow but inevitable decline of the whole modern world into the chaos and anarchy of a modern dark age. This does not mean "the end of the world." There is no doubt in my mind that after a longer or shorter interregnum new social forces will emerge to begin that sisyphean labour of constructing a new social order which is the true meaning of human history.

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LETTERS

Pipes' Solzhenitsyn

IT SEEMS TO ME that in his commentary (ENCOUNTER, June) on "Solzhenitsyn and the Russian Intellectual Tradition" Professor Richard Pipes defines the issues too narrowly. He locates Solzhenitsyn within the old slavophile-Westerniser debate, and then proceeds to tax him with the most difficult features of the extreme "conservative Slavophile" position. The most important contention here, and the basis of Pipes' entire critique, is that "man is inherently a corrupt being." Hence Solzhenitsyn's emphasis on the "futility" of manipulating man's social and political environment, an emphasis which Pipes considers "axiomatic for all Russian conservatives." What I hear, however, in the Harvard commencement address as well as elsewhere in Solzhenitsyn's work, is not that man is incorrigibly evil but rather that man is incorrigibly spiritual.

If man is incorrigibly spiritual, then so is society. Social issues become spiritual issues which cannot be resolved by policies limited to manipulations of the environment. Such efforts do not go far enough, do not deal with the problems in all their complexity. Life in society is really a spiritual communion calling for a continual interior transformation. It is not so much which comes first, dealing with individuals or dealing with social and economic and political environments; rather it is a question of the level at which the problem is met. Will the issues be addressed merely in terms of externals, or will they be met in their inner depths?

This, I take it, is the heart of the message. That it should continually be translated into the old terms of "Slavophile-Westerniser", individuals and society, progressives and puritans, seems to me a function of the culture which mediates the reception of the message. The prevailing Western notion of society is impersonal and rather mechanistic; against this the Russians of Solzhenitsyn's tradition proclaim a fundamentalist personalism. Professor Pipes confesses his allegiance to the prevailing Western view when he defines society as "an environment for the mutual tolerance and restraint of human weakness." The perfect society in this view would be the perfect environment, not the fullness of communion. It would be the Perfect Justice Machine, rather than the Perfect Love.

THE MESSAGE I HEAR from Solzhenitsyn is very much like that I hear from Dostoevsky, the later Tolstoy, and (on the American scene) Sorokin. In the 20th century it has been articulated by such distinguished émigré thinkers as Berdyaev, S. L. Frank, and N. Lossky. Its 19th-century antecedents include N. Fyodorov and V. Solovyov. I think it unfair to assert that such thinkers have opposed reform. Most often, they have called for reconstruction of social relations along familistic lines. Their vision has been one of mutual aid with definite anarchist overtones, perhaps best known outside Russia through the work of Kropotkin. In the West, where this vision has never been such an ideal, it is understandably regarded as an odd relic, like the distinctive geometry of St Basil's Cathedral.

Thus it is that Solzhenitsyn himself comes to be regarded as a sort of relic, a medieval holy man or a captive of 19th-century political conservatism. Perhaps he is regarded as an amalgam of the two. And I suppose that this impression is what moves me to comment.

For in spite of my own differences with Solzhenitsyn I really believe that his message is much more modern than many of us would like to think. Put simply, I believe that the message speaks to the malaise of the times in a profound and truthful way. Such profundity and truth are, as Professor Pipes correctly points out, distinctively Russian in their heritage.

LAWRENCE T. NICHOLS

Boston College
Boston, Mass.

Kristol's "Adversaries"

IN "The Adversary Culture of the Intellectuals" [ENCOUNTER, October 1979], Professor Irving Kristol offers us a most admirable statement of the thesis that, for the larger part, European and American intellectuals have during the past century taken a negative view of the society they live in. His attempt to explain why they have done so is, however, less than persuasive. He should have emphasised two features of the bourgeois-capitalist society with which he is centrally concerned: that it rested on a philosophy of liberalism; and that it emerged, almost as a counter-society, from the matrix of aristocracy.

Viewing the attitude of intellectuals to bourgeois-capitalist society in this light, one could more readily understand why they became its adversaries.

1: the liberal polity has afforded all its constituent groups, and most obviously its intellectuals, a ready license to voice their critiques and discontents.

2: the professionalisation that is the special hallmark of bourgeois-capitalist society has inevitably spurred those whose job it is to be intellectual not only to express their ideas but to express them in a way that would give them a conspicuousness for consumption: negatively. Indeed, guiding his own visible hand, it is to the intellectual's self-interest to seek that kind of conspicuousness.

3: in the disestablished world of liberalism, some group had perforce to serve as a priesthood for all believers, and who could better claim that service than intellectuals?

4: success in bourgeois-capitalist society has most usually been financial and material, and also most usually not the special competence of intellectuals; and if outright envy may not always be the immediate source of their critiques, it is at the very least a sense that bourgeois-capitalism offers them a skimpy meal without their just desserts.

5: the advent of commercial society did not, as Professor Kristol argues, deprive writers and artists of status, but conversely created a multiplicity of avenues to status they did not earlier have. To see this, one has, for example, merely to contrast Mozart's vain knockings at the door of aristocracy with the triumphs in the mid-19th-century bourgeois world of his far less talented musical successors. But a world in which one's *carrière* is

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ouverte aux talents does after all insist on *talents*, and does throw an embarrassing light on those who may not have them. A knapsack may be a place for carrying a marshal's baton or, to those who like to ideate themselves into grandeur, for concealing the truth that they have no batons and are indeed nothing more than corporals.

In effect, if he had used Tocqueville's contrast between the polities of aristocracy and democracy, Professor Kristol might have come up with a far more convincing explanation of why intellectuals have made a profession of attacking the ideals of their own society. It is, in any event, a unique phenomenon, as Professor Kristol adequately indicates, that our society has engaged a whole bureaucracy of Jeremiahs and has been paying, all told, remarkably high prices for letting them declaim their self-advertising and self-gratifying jeremiads.

A. S. EISENSTADT

School of Social Science
Brooklyn College
City University, New York

Christian Capitalism?

PAUL JOHNSON, in his article ["Is There a Moral Basis for Capitalism?", October] makes a good case for the worth of the individual and for his responsibility to his conscience, as stressed by religious and moral teaching. But when he says "the notion of freehold possession was by far the most important *Christian* contribution to the emergence of Capitalism" and "the roots of Capitalism lay in the ethics of Christianity", I cannot follow him.

The Founder of Christianity, who "had not where to lay his head", taught his followers—"to lay not up treasure on earth . . . to consider the lilies . . . to take no thought for the morrow." He praised the poor widow who gave up all she had, and sent the rich young ruler away to sell his property and give the money to the poor. He warned of the sudden death of the "Capitalist" farmer who kept extending his property by building larger barns. One could go on. . . .

It is very respectable and proper in a stable society for many people to own property—but it has little to do with Christianity. Paul Johnson says "it takes nerve to suggest a moral basis for Capitalism." It takes more nerve, in these materialistic days, to say what the New Testament taught about the danger to the quality of man's life in his accumulation of wealth.

GLADYS SALES

Bexhill
East Sussex

Feminine Endings

YOUR COLUMN *Life & Letters Today* (ENCOUNTER, October) devotes much space to Sex Linguistics and quotes the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* that

> "in German—as in all languages with 'feminine endings'—it is a little easier to meet the demands of the Women's Libbers."

If the endings make things a little easier, not so the beginnings.

Consider: In German a child is born neuter—*das Kind*. If the child born is male it soon becomes masculine—*der Knabe*, and thenceforth all his sex-linguistic troubles are over. When the poor child is female it continues for many years neuter—*das Maedchen*. Then, for a few short teen-age years, it may become masculine—*der Backfisch*. Reverting decently to type she becomes once again neuter—*das Fräulein*. This is rather worrying and a suitable masculine young man is found to whom she is presented as definitely feminine—*die Braut*. He takes her to the Registry, they sign on the dotted line, and instantly she again becomes neuter—*das Weib*. In course of time she does become intermittently feminine—*die Frau*.

What are the Women's Libbers doing about all this? And do they accept that members of the oldest profession be referred to as *das Frauenzimmer*?

Rehov Haeshel D. ISRAELI
Herzlia Hof-Yam
Israel

THE ITEM "Eurosex Linguistics" in *Life & Letters Today* (October) described how German feminists are extending the use of the feminine ending.

How curious! In my own country (Denmark) the tendency of the Women's Libbers is to liberate themselves of the feminine ending. Call a *lærerinde* (feminine of *lærer* = teacher) "*lærerinde*" and she will probably clout you one in the name of sex equality.

HILARY BARNES

Dalmose
Denmark

Auschwitz

I WAS AMAZED at the last sentence in Michael Thompson's answer to Gillian Tindall ("Letters", August):

> "I might add that when I discuss these patterns of thought and behaviour with colleagues whose families perished in Auschwitz, we are able to talk inoffensively of gas ovens, final solutions, and the like. Sometimes we even laugh."

This sentence is either "inaccurate" or disgusting. (As a matter of fact, it can be, and is both.) I have never met, among the survivors I know—and since I come from Poland, I know a few—any who "laughed" at their memories, or talked calmly, "inoffensively" (?) about "final solutions."

NORMA FREEDMAN

New York City

OF COURSE gas ovens and final solutions are offensive, and it has never been my intention to suggest otherwise. What I meant was that we were able to talk *about* such things without giving offence to *one another*.

MICHAEL THOMPSON

Bath

ENCOUNTER acknowledges financial assistance from, among other generous donors, the Arts Council of Great Britain.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY WATMOUGHS LIMITED, IDLE, BRADFORD; AND LONDON

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AUTHORS

Neill Foster, among other jobs, spent two years as a bush pilot in the Canadian Arctic, and later worked for IATA as a technical specialist. In 1960 he joined Alexander Duckham's, and was appointed Managing Director on their take-over by BP; more recently he was Managing Director of Littlewood's Pools.

Anthony Rhodes' numerous books include *Propaganda* (Angus & Robertson, 1976) and *Sword of Bone: The Phoney War and Dunkirk* (Severn House, 1975). His article on "The Persico Papers" will form part of his forthcoming *The Vatican in the Age of the Liberal Democracies 1870–1922*. One volume of this trilogy on *The Power of Rome in the 20th Century* has already appeared (*The Vatican in the Age of the Dictators*, Hodder, 1973), and the projected third volume will cover the period from 1945.

Keith Kyle has reported on the Irish scene for BBC Television over the last decade. He was formerly on the staff of *The Economist*, and is now Meetings Administrator for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, and a correspondent for *The Observer*.

François Bondy is an editor of the monthly *Schweizer Monatshefte* and of *Die Weltwoche* (Zurich).

Werner Höfer is a television producer for Westdeutscher Rundfunk in Cologne, and moderator of the long-running "Meet the Press" programme.

Günter Maschke is a correspondent of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. He was in the 1960s one of the leaders of the West German student revolutionary movement, and lived for several years in Castro's Cuba.

Leopold Labedz is Editor of *Survey* Magazine, a London quarterly. He edited the standard volume on *Revisionism* (1963) and *Solzhenitsyn: 'A Documentary Record* (Penguin, 1972). Among his articles in ENCOUNTER are "Deutscher's 'Stalin'" (January 1979), "The Two Minds of George Kennan" (April 1978) and "Raymond Aron's Vindication" (September 1977).

R. W. Noble is the author of *Joyce Cary* (Oliver & Boyd, 1973), and of several English-as-a-Second-Language publications for Longman and Oxford.

Max Beloff was Gladstone Professor of Government and Public Administration, University of Oxford, from 1957–74, when he became Principal of the University College at Buckingham; he retired from this post at the end of 1979. His most recent book (as co-author) is *The Government of the United Kingdom* (Weidenfeld, 1979).

Lord Chalfont was Defence Correspondent of *The Times* in London from 1961–64, and Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, from 1964, when he was created a life peer, until 1970. He is a Director of IBM UK Ltd, and Vice-President of the European Atlantic Committee. His *Montgomery of Alamein* was published by Weidenfeld in 1976, and he continued the ENCOUNTER series of "Authors & Critics" articles with his "Monty in Crossfire" (December 1976). His most recent contribution is "Into a Dangerous Decade" (April 1979).

Andrew Boyle's books include biographies of Leonard Cheshire (*No Passing Glory*, Collins, 1972), Lord Reith (*Only the Wind Will Listen*, 1972), Brendan Bracken (*Poor Dear Brendan*, 1974), and *The Riddle of Erskine Childers* (1977), all published by Hutchinson, who also brought out in 1979 *The Climate of Treason* (USA: Dial Press).

John Gribbin, after research in astrophysics in Cambridge, joined the editorial staff of *Nature*. After a further spell in research at the Science Policy Research Unit, working with a team studying "world futures", he is now a free-lance writer, and Physics Consultant to the *New Scientist*. His scientific publications include *White Holes* (Paladin, 1977), *The Climatic Threat* (Fontana, 1979), *Timewarps* (Dent, 1979) and *Future Worlds* (Abacus, 1979). His article is the fifth in a series of columns planned by **Arthur Koestler**, for which he acts as an editorial adviser; his article "Horizons in Space" inaugurated the series in the October 1979 issue.

Richard Mayne is former head of the UK offices of the Commission of the European Communities. He recently won the Scott-Moncrieff prize for his translation of Jean Monnet's *Memoirs*, and is editor of *The New Atlantic Challenge* (Charles Knight, 1975). His study of *The Europeans* was published by Weidenfeld and Library Press, N.Y., in 1972.

Kenneth Minogue is Reader in Political Science at the London School of Economics, and author of *Nationalism* (1976) and *The Concept of a University* (Weidenfeld, 1972). Among his articles for ENCOUNTER are critiques of J. K. Galbraith (December 1977), Carlos Castaneda (August 1976), and Dr Benjamin Spock (July 1975).

Ronald Butt is assistant editor of the *Sunday Times* and political columnist of *The Times*. He is the author of *The Power of Parliament* (1967, n.e. 1970).

George Mikes, President of PEN in Exile, is the author of numerous books, ranging from the famous *How To Be an Alien* (first published 1946) through *Switzerland for Beginners* (1962) to his latest, *Tsi-Tsa: The Story of a Cat* (Deutsch, 1978).

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Life & Letters Today

Nashville

BIBLICAL COMMANDO: Police in the Bible Belt city of Nashville, Tennessee, have broken up a Bible-stealing ring that was making off with the Scriptures by the case load. The gang's haul had amounted to 1,200 Bibles, worth about $30,000 (£16,500). The Bibles were expensively produced, with leather bindings. They are sold retail at $20 to $40 (£11 to £22) each. Police said:

" 'Thou shalt not steal'—it's in the Bible. They should have read the Bible. We are in the Bible Belt and things might go pretty rough on them."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

London

DIALOGUE: *"The film audience is so conditioned it is doing your work for you," the film-maker explained.*

At the very beginning of "Alien", Ridley Scott uses this device to create unease: he makes the dialogue indistinct—so that people will be worried about what they are missing.

When the studio complained they couldn't understand what was being said, Scott said bluntly: "You're not bloody well supposed to. . . ."

DAILY MAIL

London

NAMES: *An Englishman's home is no longer his castle—you can tell by the way he names it. Houses on modern estates do not attract the same pride which begat a host of Hawthornes, Hilcots and Lymingtons between the wars. Owners no longer feel the need to distinguish them with a glamorous name. "Grotti Cottage", "Kaos" and "Woodworm's Hilton" bear witness to this. But there are still those who bestow thought and inventiveness on house names.*

"Izzy Inn" is the name of a handyman whose neighbours keep calling on him to do odd jobs, and "Justandy" is very close to the shops and the bus station. "Kwitchurbelyakin" speaks for itself.

Mythology is providing an increasing number of names: Janus, Bacchanalia, Valhalla and Pandora are all in vogue. Manufactured names—"Ersanmyne", "Wedunno" and "Owzitis"—are also becoming more popular.

THE OBSERVER

Johannesburg

BALANCE: John Tate, a Black American boxer, coasted to an easy points win over the Transvaal's Gerrie Coetzee on Saturday to take the world heavyweight title. Whites mourned but South African Blacks were largely jubilant.

South Africa's dilemma was probably best summed up by the actions of the anti-Government "Pretoria News" which printed two evening editions before the fight. That aimed at White readers forecast in a banner headline "IT'S COETZEE," while the other for Black readers proclaimed "IT'S TATE."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

Helsinki

HELSINKI DUCK: The Youth Board here has ruled that Donald Duck is not suitable reading for children and has cancelled library subscriptions to the comic.

The board found that Donald was unduly bourgeois. It also complained of pictures of naked ducks, tales of incomplete families, harmful attitudes towards children and Donald's common-law marriage.

THE TIMES

London

WHO/WHOM?: Murdering the English language is a very popular crime all over the world. The moment is opportune to ask practising journalists to remove one large mote from their own eye—the shocking abuse of the relative pronoun "whom."

Fowler inveighed against the abuse fifty years ago, though with very little success if one is to judge from recent examples in the "quality" Press. "The bishop was particularly critical of Mr Nkomo, whom he alleged had started a civil war" ("Times" 18.6.77).

"The other head in the fridge was that of . . . a beautiful girl who had been coming to Amin and whom he suspected was running with other men" ("Sunday Times" 11.9.77).

The more ambitious writer occasionally pulls off a double in the same sentence.

"They and Murdoch, whom it was assumed might be tempted back . . . were for the next six weeks to be the only contenders whom the Observer management considered had enough money . . . to carry on the paper" ("Observer" 28.11.76).

"Monsieur Loret, whom Professor Maser is convinced is Hitler's son, was questioned . . . in occupied Paris in 1940 and asked whom his father was" ("Times" 1.12.77).

"What makes people write 'whom' in such sentences?" asks Fowler plaintively, as he piles example on example. The mistake arises presumably from an ill-digested knowledge of English sentence structure; it is not found in the popular Press, which rarely treats its readers to the dependent adjectival clause.

SUNDAY TIMES

Bonn

CALENDAR: Does the West German publishing industry know something we don't? A financial thriller, "The Crash of '79" by Paul Erdman, has just appeared in a German translation with the title "Crash '81: Der Grosse Schock."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

Washington D.C.

NAME-CALLING: The coolness between Prime Minister Margaret ("Maggie") Thatcher and President James ("Jimmy") Carter began at the Tokyo summit, when the Englishwoman made plain her distaste for the first-name informality that Carter had used with her predecessor.

BUSINESS WEEK

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